

ELEMENTARY ENGLISH

XXIX

NOVEMBER, 1952

No. 7

The Work of Elizabeth Yates

JAMES C. MACCAMPBELL¹

It is likely that the work of Elizabeth Yates can be characterized best by describing its versatility. More than most authors of books for children and young people, Miss Yates is able to appeal to the very young child with his need for images and concrete expression; the teenage youngster whose reading tastes are so volatile; and to the young adult whose taste in literature is becoming increasingly sophisticated. This is an unusual quality in the work of any writer and in that of Elizabeth Yates the material for each age level is beautifully written and plot is carefully delineated. This is not to imply, however, that the work of this author will appeal to all children, all youth, or to every young adult. It is probable that quite the contrary is true, since Elizabeth Yates' writing is filled with philosophical understandings, with beautiful imagery, and with carefully worked out dialogue which will be interesting only to young people for whom reading is a challenge. These books are not time wasters. They are profound mirrors of the best kinds of human experience with which thoughtful and eager young people are vitally concerned.

Miss Yates is primarily a New England woman, even though she was born in Buffalo and grew up on a New York farm south of that city. Somehow people who love New England become New Englanders very quickly and the farm heritage of Elizabeth Yates provides her with a sensitiveness to people and animals and growing things which is so much a part of New England and which, in turn, reveals itself in everything she writes. For the reader who is also sensitive to these things the books of Elizabeth Yates are completely satisfying.

Perhaps one of the most engaging of Elizabeth Yates' books for the teen-age reader is *Patterns on the Wall*. (Knopf, 1943). This book, which depicts life in New Hampshire in the early 1800's, was awarded the New York *Herald Tribune* Spring Book Festival prize. It is bound in a lovely format, its front cover showing an example of the stencils of the itinerant wall painter of the early nineteenth century. In this book the lovely expressions and descriptions which characterize all of

¹Supervisor of Instruction, Cleveland Heights, Ohio.

Miss Yates' books are found. The theme of the story is an unusual one and one which is little known even in New England. It is the story of a traveling painter who wandered about the country-side of New England, which can be so bleak and so beautiful at the same time, bringing the beauty of the out-doors into the homes where there was little time and almost no money for making homes lovely on the inside. He was warmly received wherever he went, for he brought entertainment and news of the outside world along with his paints and his skill in making the walls of the houses beautiful. Elizabeth Yates has written in this story a narrative which will capture the interest of young people regardless of whether their interest lies in the history of murals, in farming, or in the romance with which the book is replete. She has captured the essence of life somehow in the happiness and sorrow of Jared Austin, who was apprenticed while only a boy to an itinerant painter of murals. The years of his learning the trade were pleasant ones, since he loved the man from whom he learned and for whom he worked. It was during those years that his love for Jenet Thaxter was expressed in his planning for the day when he would be independent and able to practice his trade.

Jared's artistic genius for this work was profound and set him apart from his fellows whether he wished it or not. Something in his gift made him unusually sensitive to suffering and enabled him to bring comfort to those who needed it. When a severe winter struck the land and when again freakish summer weather caused crops to fail and the threats of famine to come to the people, it was Jared

who was blamed as being so different from most people that suspicious, ignorant forces in the community could brand him a witch.

The book has good plot, which at times becomes exciting. But primarily, as in all Elizabeth Yates' work, it is the beauty of the writing, the sensitiveness of the characterization, and the mood of the descriptive passages which are outstanding. An example of this mood is in the first words of *Patterns on the Wall*:

Jared lay on his back by the brook, watching the tracery of budded boughs sway against the spring sky. They made a pattern of green upon blue, repeating itself down the brook, through the woods, along the roadside, everywhere—everywhere in the world. Jared sat up at the wonder of the thought, the same pattern repeating itself wherever there were trees to move against the sky. It was beauty, Jared thought, here in this New Hampshire pasture; it was beauty everywhere.

In this first paragraph Miss Yates has provided the essence of her story; she has shown her reader the kind of person Jared is and how his kindliness, strength of character, and faith in nature and in beauty withstood every adversity which came to him.

A book by Elizabeth Yates for young children is *Under the Little Fir and Other Stories* (Coward-McCann, 1942), a collection of very beautiful short tales which make excellent stories for telling as well as reading. The title story, *Under the Little Fir*, is based on an old legend which tells that there is peace among all the animals at Christmas time when the fox and the mouse and the deer and all the others can sit together in understanding around their feast. The children have just finished trimming the Christmas tree for the animals

with tempting bits of food when the story opens.

Chatting together, they put their fingers on their lips for silence as a rustling at the edge of the woods told of furry creatures that might be watching. But perhaps it was only the wind, they whispered, and with a last laughing look ran home across the meadow.

Another story in this collection relates how a prince went to live among his people as they lived in order to help them and learn to be like them in order that he might serve them adequately as their king. The prince learned of the integrity of people, of their love and generosity and helpfulness and he came to believe in them so completely that he was chosen king. This little book of six stories ought to have its place in the classroom of every primary teacher who will turn to it again and again for examples of the beautiful stories children need to hear read and told so often during these early years. The stories are imaginative and filled with gentleness in people and animals and kindness to everyone in the world.

Mountain Born (Coward-McCann, 1943) is a story somewhat older children will enjoy reading for themselves, but it has in it so much of interest for them that younger children will respond to hearing it read or told. It is a simple, country story based on a little boy's development into a helpful, valued member of his farm home and the busy life there. As important a character as the boy, Peter, is the young lamb which grew into a fine, black sheep and became the leader of the flock.

The author does not tell her readers just where this story is placed in time or in geographical location and such is the value of the story for itself that these facts never

seem necessary. Here again, the versatility of Elizabeth Yates is shown in the sensitive approach to both the problems of childhood and adulthood. The pervading quality of this book is love for animals and a constant sensing of the interdependence of people and animals. Here we see portrayed a human need for animal association as well as the need of human beings for food and clothing which the animals can give them.

A second theme of the story, only slightly less important than the sheep themselves, is the coat for Peter with which he is always concerned. This coat is made from the wool of his own sheep and is intended to serve him for five years of his growing up. Valued as the coat is and as expensive as it is when all things are considered, the attitude of Peter's father to the occasional tear is a refreshing and happy one to a little boy.

Peter felt for the patch and ran his hand over it. The coat had been so new then, it had been hard to keep the sadness from his eyes at the big ugly tear until his father told him it was a badge of honor. ("All good clothes wear such or they aren't fit for much," his father had said.) Peter had felt better at that and could bear without regret the patch his mother had put on. He could even bear to have others in his coat, if they came honorably.

But even with the importance of the coat playing so valued a place in Peter's life it was still the sheep, and especially Peter's own lamb which became the leader of the flock, that is the constant, moving theme of the story. Everyone in the family is always concerned for the welfare of the sheep for even if they were not so valuable in terms of money they are a loved part of the home and family. From the very beginning when the lamb was brought

back to life from almost total lifelessness by old Benj, the lamb and Peter are inseparable companions sharing in the good things as well as the hardships of the rugged life of the sheep farm.

The story will capture the hearts of children with Peter's yearning over the lamb as his own very first possession to care for and look after. Elizabeth Yates shows her sensitiveness to children when she says: "The lamb was the first thing Peter had ever had to care for and its needs made him conscious of what he could do for it." These words will cause every child who reads them to feel a response either to a need, if he has never had a pet, or to a satisfaction if he has cared well for a pet he has had.

The book is always realistic. All is not joy on a farm and it would be false writing to imply that it is. First of all there is weather, for weather is both the farmer's necessary friend as well as his enemy. There are severe storms which cause men and animals suffering. And there is the presence of death, for death is a part of life even in the midst of a youngster's joy over his new-found animal friends. Occasionally there is need to kill in the animal world because some animals cause harm. There was the incident of the wolf which was harassing the flock. It was necessary to kill the wolf, for he would kill if he were not stopped. It is a moving scene and children will respond to its drama for they wish the sheep, with which they have become indentedified, to be protected:

Benj took down the gun which was handled on such rare occasions that it was filmed with dust. It had been years since it has been used to enforce death, as it would be now.

And when he returned:

"Got him," Benj said.

"What was it?" Andrew asked.

"Wolf," Benj. said.

He hung the gun up and went to wash his hands. A look of relief came over him. He hated the gun, but when he had to use it he could. He had no heart for killing, but if it was to save life that was another matter.

It is not difficult for the child to see that for some reason wolves do more harm than good in the world and therefore must go. It ceased to be a cruel necessity and became, instead, expedient.

Then the natural requirements of farm life which so often seem cruel and difficult of understanding for the city-born are explained so convincingly and so honestly in the writing of Elizabeth Yates that the child reader learns along with Peter that life goes on in its pattern, occasionally making severity and anguish a necessary part of itself. When Peter first became aware of the necessity for removing the lambs' tails at the age of six he was helped by the careful explanations of insightful adults to accept it and face it as he was always called upon to face reality wherever he came upon it. Again the wisdom of the father comes to the fore:

"Today the lambs are just two weeks old and we must dock their tails." At the questioning look in his son's face Andrew went on, "Lambs are born with long tails, Peter, but you must have known that something happens to them before they are many weeks old."

The boy nodded, "ye-es," he said, "but I — I thought —"

"What did you think?" The man's tone was firm but kindly.

"I — I thought they fell off — or the the wind took them. I didn't know you cut them."

The man rose from the table. "Benj and I shall be ready in a half hour. Finish your porridge, Peter."

"Does it hurt them, Father?" the boy asked.

"Yes, it does, but only for a moment, and it is for their good. A tail is a useless thing. Without it a lamb grows to be a better sheep, cleaner, stronger, worth more in the market."

Peter turned to his mother when the door shut behind his father. "Must the cosset, too, lose her little black tail?"

"Yes, Peter, they all must go."

There is no attempt to fool children in this book nor in any of the work of Elizabeth Yates. Hard-to-face facts are clothed in gentleness and are often only softly emphasized but they are always there if the need to have them there is present.

The book, throughout, is beautifully written in quiet, lovely, carefully descriptive language which makes the reader feel the soft wind of spring and the hot sun of summer as it shines down on the hillsides. One can smell the smell of the sheep and feel the grease upon the fleeces:

Peter lay on his back in the short dry grass. The air was still with the stillness of late summer when the earth has ceased pushing growth forth and is sunning itself, awaiting harvest. Distant, but not far, the sound of small hooves could be heard as they went from one tuft of grass to another, and even the dull sounds of crunching and chewing came on the warm air. Good sounds they were that meant all was well with the flock.

There are parts of this book which seem to be somewhat beyond the understanding of the children who will be interested in its story. Here and there emphases are placed on understandings which only adults are likely to appreciate and which may be a little puzzling to the

boy or girl who reads them. In most cases, these references appear in the thinking of the adults concerned with the child characters. For example, Peter's mother, after his discussion of removing the lambs' tails, is concerned with his growing up, as are all mothers. In the words of the book, her thoughts are made clear:

Martha looked at her son. So this was the beginning of growing up. This was where the road they had been traveling together first parted.

In the opinion of the writer such references as this may detract from the pleasure the child gets from the book. It is likely that children's concepts are not sufficiently mature to accept the thoughts of the adult when they are found in this manner.

In *Haven for the Brave* (Knopf, 1941), we find still another book of particular interest for the teen-age child. It, even more than many of the other Yates books, will appeal to the average boy or girl who is interested in the activities of his peers. Even though some of the reviews following the publication of this book were somewhat concerned over the frequent philosophical discussions, these do not appear to be an unduly serious obstacle to this writer. The story is interesting enough, even for the child who misses the philosophical implications, that the book will not be spoiled and it is felt that it will be refreshing for some young people to discover a book in which boys and girls like themselves are concerned with thinking through social and philosophical problems of contemporary interest. It is true that Michael and Merry, the child characters of this story, are somewhat exceptional children. This will not be objected to by most children who read the

story. Any reader will be impressed by their genuine vitality and honest approach to the problems of youngsters which are placed before them.

The book tells the story of two English youngsters, a brother and his sister, who spend the war years in America as refugees from the dangers and deprivations of war-time England. Their concern for their parents and their friends who remained in England is very real as is their enjoyment of America and in the traveling about in which all children feel a keen fascination. These children were at first concerned about leaving England and their parents in this time of struggle but through much honest thinking they came to the conclusion that their time to serve their country would come later and that their help would be of greater value if they were healthy and properly educated when that future time arrived.

The main theme of the book is peace—surely a concept which young people need to think about in as vital and challenging a way as possible. The reader is imbued, as he reads, with the pervading consciousness of peace: its elusiveness, the difficulties involved in its attainment, and of its accomplishment which is necessary if the world is to go on. Michael and Meredith were convinced by their travels

. . . that there really was only one nation in the world and that however soon enough people realized the meaning of the word freedom they would stand together and form that nation.

It is unfortunate that so many adults seem unable to understand that fundamental factor of world brotherhood since it is so self-evident to high-school and college age young people.

For those young people who are attracted to it, the story will maintain its interest and, indeed, its very vitality for the thoughtful boy or girl, through these very carefully-written philosophical passages. Young people think more deeply than many adults give them credit for probably and the philosophy of this book, developed in the conversations of Merry and Michael, is more likely to make the book increase rather than decrease in stature for them.

In their search for the meaning of peace, they decide that

. . . peace, for all its name isn't a static state. It's progressive . . . it isn't tranquillity . . . since war is destructive. It's not just happiness and contentment, it's definitely progressive — so much so that it may involve conflict.

Elizabeth Yates wrote these words before the United Nations Charter was written and yet the essence of world peace lies within them in a way which the boy looking ahead to military service in three or four years may be helped to understand more fully the peaceful world we seek, even though force and bloodshed may be involved. As Merry adds, later, ". . . nothing can conquer free men, only themselves by forgetting what freedom is."

And, again, these youngsters begin to be concerned with differences as do all young people about this time and in this connection when they begin to approach the problems of living in these thoughtful and realistic ways even though most young people do not express themselves so fluently and beautifully as these children do. It is a major discovery for them as it is for most people when they find out for themselves, as Michael did, that ". . . any difference works both ways."

The book has a steady, moving plot which will appeal to its teen-age readers. The children come to the New World, first to Canada and then to the United States, in the company of their uncle who has a somewhat mysterious and secret mission to perform for his government. The reader is never told what this mission is and it does not affect the story in any way except to point up slightly the need for secrecy of movement in war time, which is an interesting facet for the young person. Michael and Meredith spend some time with the French people of Quebec and then drive down to New Hampshire where they have an exciting interval of mountain climbing before reaching the home of the friends with whom they are to live.

The mountain-climbing episode tells of an experience which is a somewhat unusual sport for American boys and girls but a fascinating one which Elizabeth Yates has, herself, experienced in both Europe and America and which is fascinating to those people who are interested in it. Here the reader finds vivid descriptions of scenery and weather conditions and he can feel the presence of danger that lurks wherever a foot step may be misplaced or may slip in the ascent.

Every now and again, as if by the touch of a magic wand, the clouds tore apart and the rift showed the wild rocky ridge atop which they were treading, then the abrupt fall of the mountain to the timberline and its dark undulations leading down to the valley. Then, as suddenly, the clouds would swing together again and it was as if they had dreamed that the valley was there for all that really existed was the rock ridge edging the world.

In New Hampshire the children live the life of the normal American boy and

girl of their age, going to the public school, achieving success and satisfactions along with American children, and carrying on their life in the established fashion of the community with, however, the consciousness of what was taking place in England an ever-present part of their living.

This story is a common one to teachers and young people in American schools who reckon among their finest friendships those of the British children and youth who were evacuated to this country during the war. Those youngsters were truly ambassadors of good will and friendship from their country to the United States. It will be impossible ever to know the extent of their influence on the people of this country in cementing more firmly the relationships between the two great English-speaking nations.

In spite of the fact that this is a quiet book of beauty and love and peace, the reader is not allowed to forget the danger lurking in the shadows. The first bombing of London in which Merry experienced the tragedy of death for the fruit peddler and when she adopted the little dog left without his master is a vivid picture of a brave, unselfish girl.

Again in this book, as in all Miss Yates' work, appears her love for animals. Pippin, the little dog Merry rescues from destruction, follows the boy and girl through all their experiences and saves valuable property from vast damage from forest fire by his devotion and bravery.

This book is probably one of those which librarians and teachers will need to "sell" to young people. It is somewhat dated now because it does not help the

reader to understand the period of the early war years as well as it might. There may be confusion at first on this score but it remains a story which will make its readers a little better and stronger for having read it.

It is not accidental that the last book of Elizabeth Yates to be discussed in this paper is *Amos Fortune, Free Man* (Aladdin, 1950); nor is it unusual that this book won both a New York *Herald Tribune* Spring Festival Award and the American Library Association's Newbery Medal as "the most distinguished contribution to American literature for children" in 1950. This book is truly a great piece of literature for children and undoubtedly the finest of the work of Miss Yates to date.

Amos Fortune, Free Man is, of course, only partly fiction, for Amos Fortune really lived and this book tells of that life which made so profound an imprint on his community that records still remain to show the nature of his service to the men and women of two races who knew and loved him. A tremendous amount of painstaking research went into the making of the book. This fact is realized again and again as one recognizes the fine details of the man's life with which Miss Yates has worked.

Amos Fortune was born a tribal prince in Africa sometime during the early years of the eighteenth century. He was captured at about the age of fifteen by slave dealers and sold in Boston. He was a husky, good-looking lad whose purchase price was high and whose very evident intelligence gained him good masters who taught him the trade of a tanner. He

learned quickly from his Quaker owners and could soon read and write as well as speak English and came more and more to take a place in the community which was unusual for a slave in those days or even later. After many years, indeed in middle age, he had saved enough money to purchase his freedom and set himself up in business. He married three times—in each case women whose freedom he had purchased. His most abiding love was Violet who went with him into the comparative wilderness of Jaffrey, New Hampshire, late in the eighteenth century, to found their home and make their way as free people. There he died in 1801, a very old man loved and respected by everyone in this white community. The graves of Amos and Violet are still marked in the churchyard at Jaffrey and evidences of their lives remain a part of the community's life.

Perhaps an outstanding passage in the book is the first paragraph which sets an eerie scene that will immediately capture the interest of the child who reads the book.

Night came down swiftly over the equatorial forest. There was no lingering of daylight; but, after the snuffing out of the sun, darkness and the bright appearing of stars. No silence came with the darkness, for this was a night alive with song and movement. In the village of the At-Mun-Shi the people were gathering for their mystic dance that would welcome in the time of herbage, the time for the planting of corn.

The stage is set for mystery and for strange sights and sounds but it is not set for the sudden, cruel, and violent onslaught of the white men who killed the beloved chief and took prisoner the strongest and finest members of the tribe.

The white reader will feel revulsion and disgust that his ancestors could have been the perpetrators of this violent and vicious crime against a helpless and freedom-loving people.

One of the more moving experiences of a book filled with many such events is Amos Fortune's long search in Boston for his beloved little sister who was crippled and for that reason left behind on that first onslaught of the slavers. Another is his forgetfulness of his past—its language, its customs, and its people—because it was torn from him in the sudden violence of his departure from his native country.

While the cruelty with which many slaves were treated is never emphasized in the book because Amos always had a good life, there is an ever-present undercurrent which does not fail to impress the reader with the lot of the slave. No matter how well off he seemed to be, he remained in slavery and the ultimate desire of the human soul for freedom is never more vital than when freedom is lost or threatened.

And perhaps at no other time in the story do we understand Amos Fortune

better than in the last paragraph in which he is seen, a very old man, going home happy in the thought that he has placed his hard-earned money to its best possible use—in church and public school:

Amos Fortune walked slowly home, thinking of the disposition he had made of the last money he would ever earn. Humbly he prayed that as the boys and girls learned more they would know what they did and so do only what was worthy of men and women. He was happy. He felt light of heart and a buoyancy came into his footsteps.

"You can come any time now," he said, looking skyward. "for I'm ready."

It is not possible to conclude a study of the work of Elizabeth Yates without mentioning the beautiful illustrations by Nora S. Unwin which grace and complement so many of the books which Elizabeth Yates has written. Those in *Patterns on the Wall*, *Mountain Born*, and finally *Amos Fortune*, *Free Man*, indicate Miss Unwin's sensitivity to the work she has been called upon to illustrate. Miss Yates has, herself, recognized Miss Unwin's work and their long association by dedicating *Amos Fortune*, *Free Man* to her.

How Peoples Work Together: The United Nations and the Specialized Agencies, prepared by the Department of Public Information, United Nations, New York, December 1951, 2d edition, is a new publication distributed by Manhattan Publishing Co., 225 LaFayette St., New York 12. It is a well-illustrated booklet of current material on the United Nations, designed to meet the needs and interests of *high school* students. Price 75 cents.

Bibliotherapy in the Middle Grades

HANNAH M. LINDAHL¹

AND

KATHARINE KOCH²

How can I help Mary to overcome her feeling of inferiority? What can I do to instil courage in Bob who is facing a situation of insecure home relationships? What shall I do to help Alice develop a more cheerful attitude towards the problems which she faces? Is there some way of inspiring Dick to feel that his talents, although not academic, can be an outlet for happy achievement? How can I guide Helen to think less about her own problems and more about helping others? What is the stimulus that Bill needs in order to realize that an individual's acceptability in a group is largely dependent upon his willingness to cooperate, to share, and to show good sportmanship? How may Jean be guided in recognizing that her attitude of snobbishness is the outcome of her false evaluation of racial and economic status?

Such questions assail the teacher's mind daily as she lives and works and plays with children. Her background of study of the relationships between the child's personality pattern and his attitude towards himself, his family, and his school and neighborhood associates has made her alert to his emotional needs. She knows that feelings of insecurity, inferiority, and fear of self and situations may lead not only to personal unhappiness but also to the development of undesirable personality traits and, in some instances, to mental and emotional illness. Inasmuch as the building of a wholesome, self-con-

fident, self-respecting, effective, happy personality is one of the major goals of education, the teacher is seeking constantly to find ways of giving each child the particular guidance that he needs.

One of the ways in which such guidance may be given is through suggestions for recreational reading in which the child may receive mental and emotional therapy through identification with a character in a book who faced a problem or situation similar to the child's own problem or situation. We cannot be certain, of course, that such identification will help the child to adjust to his own situation or to develop a wholesome personality. Statements from children and from adults, however, suggest that such help may be the outcome of reading the right book at the right time, as indicated, for example, by Barbara's reaction to *The Long Winter*.

The Long Winter, written by Laura Ingalls Wilder, has helped me to learn to face hardships without pouting. In this book Laura faced many hardships. Instead of pouting about them, she tried to cheer up her sisters. She helped her mother and father. She studied her school lessons with her blind sister Mary.

I realize now that I used to act babyish when I came upon hardships. That just made it all the harder for my family. Now I will try to be more cheerful and helpful.

Should the teacher make a direct rec-

¹Supervisor of Elementary Education, Mishawaka, Indiana.

²Elementary Teacher, Mary Phillips School, Mishawaka, Indiana.

ommendation of a specific book to an individual child or should her guidance be indirect? The answer depends upon the child and the situation. In some cases, the teacher may make a direct suggestion such as the comment, "Bob, here is a book about a boy who had a problem similar to yours. Perhaps you will wish to read the book to see how he met his problem."

At other times, the suggestion may be made more subtly as the teacher shows a new book to the entire class, with a few remarks concerning the situation and the leading characters in the story. Although she does not mention the book to the child who would be helped by identifying himself with a certain character in the story, she hopes that he will be the first child to select the book.

In order to use bibliotherapy in child guidance, the teacher needs to know the individual child's problems and she also needs to be familiar with children's books. For teachers in the middle grades who are interested in trying to give help to children through bibliotherapy, the following bibliography has been prepared. Because of the limitations of space, only a few of the many titles which might have been included are herein listed. Other titles and other headings may be added by the teacher who is interested in expanding the bibliography.

The classification of each title under a specific heading as well as the annotation of each book may be of service to the teacher who is seeking the right book to meet a child's need. In examining the list, the teacher will wish to bear in mind that quite often the same book might have been listed under several classifications.

The feeling of inferiority, for example, may be traced to several factors such as a physical handicap, an underprivileged home environment, racial discrimination, or comparison with a more gifted sister or brother. Therefore, it will be necessary for the teacher to familiarize herself with the content of the listed books in order to make the most effective use of them for purposes of bibliotherapy.

Adjusting To School

Hayes, Florence. *Skid*. Houghton Mifflin 1948.

Having just won a coveted position of captain on the baseball team in his all-Negro school in Georgia, Skid moves to Connecticut where he meets, with courage, the indifference or active enmity of classmates in an all-white school. Skid's feeling of not belonging and his consequent unhappiness are portrayed with sympathetic touch.

Scott, Gabriel. *Kari*. Doubleday, Doran 1935.

The little Norwegian girl of the story is a day dreamer, scolded by her aunt for being lazy and for not concentrating on her duties. When Kari fails in mathematics, an understanding mother and father help her to find happiness in cooking and housekeeping. The foreign flavor of the translator's style may not attract children with reading difficulties. The book is an excellent one to hand to parents of children who face failure in school.

Urmston, Mary. *The New Boy*. Doubleday Doran 1950.

When Jack's family moves from California to the East, Jack dreads entering a new school, particularly since illness has caused him to be retained a year and he is in the same class with a younger sister. With his mind set against a new school, Jack's life is not easy, but he learns to make the necessary adjustments.

Woolley, Catherine. *Ginnie and Geneva*. Morrow 1948.

In this book, easy enough for fourth-grade readers to enjoy, the trials of a little girl in adjusting to a new school, new classmates, and new experiences are shown.

Note that the element of difficulty in adjusting to a new school is present also in the

following books which appear under other headings in this listing:

Judy's Journey
Ladycake Farm
North Fork
Sensible Kate
Shorty Makes First Team
Susan's Safe Harbor
Taffy's Foal

Economic Insecurity

Estes, Eleanor. *The Hundred Dresses*. Harcourt Brace 1944.

Wanda Petronski, a Polish girl who lives on the wrong side of the tracks, is an alien piece of humor for thoughtless classmates to bait. Maddie, insecure herself, stands by silently, feeling mean and knowing she is wrong.

Estes, Eleanor. *The Moffats*. Harcourt Brace 1941

The manner in which an understanding and hard-working mother and her four children work together cheerfully and courageously in the face of poverty and the fact that they must move from the house they love is a tonic and an inspiration.

Gates, Doris. *Blue Willow*. Viking 1940

Janey Larkin, sharecropper's daughter, learns the truth of her father's philosophy that "Every day that comes along is an adventure to us. . . It takes just about as much courage to live without losing your grip on things." Poverty, a wandering existence with no time to feel rooted or to make friends, a dream of a real home—these are Janey's daily lot. The story also contains a sympathetic portrayal of a little Mexican neighbor.

Hall, Rubylea. *Davey*. Duell, Sloan and Pearce 1951

Davey's inferiority springs from a number of causes—his poor clothing and home, a brother sent to the chain gang for bootlegging, unsympathetic and jealous brothers, an honest but harsh father, and the lack of any amenities in the daily life of a sharecropper. The picture of just how hard life can be for many persons is rather strong meat, but superior readers in the sixth-grade will profit from this book.

Lenski, Lois. *Judy's Journey*. J. B. Lippincott 1947

Judy's insecurity stems from her life as a migratory worker with its accompanying feel-

ing of not being wanted in the schools she briefly attends and a feeling of inferiority because of her shabby clothing and a lack of "learning." Judy meets her tribulations with courage and high spirits, only occasionally tinged with despair.

Lenski, Lois. *Strawberry Girl*. J. B. Lippincott 1945

The economic insecurity of the Slater family is due partly to changing conditions and partly to the shiftlessness of the father. The neighboring newcomers, the Boyer family, make a comfortable living, but "Shoestring" Slater's father drinks to excess and is mean and revengeful. Shoestring's shame of his father is clothed with a brave pretense of indifference, but his friendship with Birdie Boyer helps him to find himself.

Seredy, Kate. *A Tree for Peter*. Viking 1941

The book tells how a stranger, a small lame boy, and a friendly policeman transform Shantytown and give renewed hope to the poverty-stricken inhabitants of a city slum. The style is beautiful. Although many children will miss the symbolism of the story, there is a message for the right child.

Economic insecurity is a factor also in the following books mentioned elsewhere in this listing:

Blueberry Mountain
Carol from the Country
Chariot in the Sky
Shorty Makes First Team
Stand Fast and Reply
Susan's Safe Harbor
The Very Good Neighbors

Feeling of Inferiority and Not Belonging

Daringer, Helen F. *Adopted Jane*. Harcourt Brace 1947

Jane Douglas has never been chosen for adoption from the orphanage because she is not so "pretty and cute" as others. To the unwanted child there suddenly comes the opportunity to visit in two homes—the first home life that she can remember. Jane's good sense, courage, and unselfishness are amply rewarded.

Davis, Lavinia R. *Stand Fast and Reply*. Doubleday 1943

Bitsy's sudden awareness that she is no longer popular with her sophisticated group because she is not a "smooth dame" causes her much adolescent anguish. Then her father is

sent overseas, the family income becomes seriously curtailed, and the family moves to a relative's farm home. Full of self-sympathy and a feeling of superiority over her country cousins, Bitsy has a hard time until she matures enough to differentiate between false and true values. Sixth-grade girls may find this book helpful.

Eyre, Katherine Wigmore. *Spurs for Antonia*. Oxford University Press 1943

At the death of her great-aunt, Antonia is sent to live on a ranch in California with a father that she does not remember. When she accidentally discovers that her father had wanted a boy, Antonia jumps to the false conclusion that she is unwanted. However, she perseveres until complications are overcome and she wins her spurs.

Gates, Doris. *Sensible Kate*. Viking 1943

Because orphaned Kate is unwanted by relatives she is placed "on the county" and finds friends and a home with the Tuttle family. Kate's insecurity, however, is intensified by the feeling that she is ugly and that she is disliked by certain of her new classmates. Her self-esteem is restored by an artist-neighbor and his charming wife, and Kate finally receives the love that she craves.

Gorsline, Douglas. *Farm Boy*. Viking 1950

This book is too mature and lacks the action demanded by most sixth-grade readers, but it may be just the right book for a special case. Adolescent John has failed to meet life. He is lazy, he revolts against any discipline, he is in trouble at school, and he feels lost. When he is sent to live on a farm with an understanding uncle, he regains his self-esteem and is instrumental in helping to solve the problem of a runaway from a nearby Reform School.

Jackson, Caary Paul. *Shorty Makes First Team*. Wilcox Follett 1950

Shorty carries a man-size load of chips on his shoulder. He feels inferior because of his short stature; he thinks that certain basketball team-mates scorn him because of his lower economic status; he feels that teachers have it in for him. In an exciting sport story the author shows how Shorty adjusts himself to happier relationships.

Lawrence, Mildred. *The Homemade Year*. Harcourt Brace 1950

When Vicky's mother is ordered to the

hospital for a year, Vicky goes to live with Aunt Jess and her four cousins. Ignorant of rural ways Vicky finds herself a misfit and feels that she is useless and unimportant. In a most unusual and original fashion Vicky discovers an outlet for her talents, learns to use her hands and her ingenuity, and becomes an accepted and important member of a family group.

The feeling of not belonging is also strong in the following books:

Judy's Journey

Skid

The Moved Outers

Feeling of Superiority

Eyre, Katherine Wigmore. *Susan's Safe Harbor*. Oxford University Press 1942

When impoverished circumstances face his family, Susan's artist-father is glad to make use of a friend's flat on Telegraph Hill. But Susan, filled with nostalgia for the former home, has difficulty adjusting to the shabby, rickety houses of Firenze Street, to the queer, greasy smells from foreign cookery, the alien sounding names of her new neighbors, and the crowded new school. When Susan learns that names and customs may differ but that persons are pretty much the same, she loses her dual feeling of inferiority and superiority.

Friedman, Frieda. *Carol from the Country*. Morrow 1950

Forced by economic troubles to move from a comfortable home in a small town to an unattractive apartment in New York City, Carol resents the noise, the confusion, the heat, and most of all the neighbors towards whom she feels a definite sense of superiority. Carol's social adjustment is slow, painful, and steady.

Gates, Doris. *North Fork*. Viking 1945

Drew Saunders, fresh from San Francisco private schools and very conscious of class differences, responds to the friendly helpfulness of Monty, the Indian boy, with a tip. From that moment his new life at North Fork, where he will some day inherit his father's lumber industry, is full of complications. In time he loses his arrogance toward his Indian classmates and develops a sense of values.

Gates, Doris. *Trouble for Jerry*. Viking 1944

Jerry possesses an overdeveloped sense of his own importance as well as a male superi-

ority toward girls. When his father accepts two girls as paying guests on the ranch, Jerry's difficulties begin. He finally "has the cockiness knocked out of him" and learns to recognize that girls in general have their place in the sun and that Sarah in particular is true blue and a good sport.

***Meeting Trouble and Facing
Responsibility***

Bialk, Elisa. *Taffy's Foal*. Houghton Mifflin 1949

During the years she has lived with her grandmother, Nancy Irwin has given her whole heart to the tan mare Taffy. When her father remarries, Nancy returns to Chicago where she finds it difficult to adjust to a new stepmother, a new home, new classmates, but most of all to a life without horses. With her stepmother's wise guidance she learns to accept disappointment and the death of her beloved mare.

Brink, Carol Ryrie. *Caddie Woodlawn*. Macmillan 1939

Carol is a pioneer girl of Wisconsin who resents the fact that she must grow into a young lady and give up the carefree tomboy experiences that she has shared with her brothers. Carol's adjustment will be appreciated by sixth-grade girls who are beginning to face similar problems.

Eaton, Jeanette. *Ghandi, Fighter without a Sword*. Morrow 1950

From his childhood days till his death Ghandi faced almost insurmountable difficulties. He met bitter disappointments, setbacks, racial prejudice, and injustice with calmness, fortitude, and understanding of their causes.

There are many biographies of famous men that reveal to children the need for courage and perseverance as heroic men try to build a better world. Two other titles written by this same outstanding author and suitable for superior readers in sixth grade are *Lone Journey: The Life of Roger Williams* and *Narcissa Whitman: Pioneer of Oregon*.

Faulkner, Georgene and Becker, John. *Melindy's Medal*. Messner 1945

Although Melindy is a Negro child, there is no feeling of racial insecurity shown in the book. Neither is there economic insecurity after the family moves from the slums to a pleasant home. Melindy's problem is quite dif-

ferent. All the male members of Grandmother's family have won medals for heroic service in battle. Melindy regrets that she is a girl and cannot win a medal, too. But Melindy does win a medal and in a most unusual and original fashion.

Holberg, Ruth. *Tomboy Row*. Doubleday 1952

Although her four older sisters seem to enjoy being "young ladies", the heroine of this book has her troubles in making the change from tomboy to lady.

Holberg, Ruth and Richard. *Oh, Susanna*. Doubleday 1939

This is another book dealing with the common problem of changing from tomboy status to that of a well-behaved little lady. In this story a pioneer girl tries to be ladylike as she makes a trip to the East.

Hunt, Mabel Leigh. *Young Man of the House*. Lippincott 1944

When nine-year-old Ebenezer's father has to leave his doctor's practice to join the army, Ebenezer tries to assume the responsibility of man of the house. But Ebenezer, being a typically heedless boy, continues to find himself involved in a normal child's mischief and troubles. How he learns that it is his own sense of responsibility and not his father's necktie that helps him is the theme of the story.

Meador, Stephen. *Blueberry Mountain*. Harcourt Brace 1941

In order to help his injured father, Buck Evans and his crippled friend Joe Sullivan tackle the job of raising and selling blueberries. Through sheer grit and perseverance they succeed in their enterprise.

Morrow, Honore. *On to Oregon*. Morrow 1946 edition

Young John Sager is passing through the adolescent stage of carelessness, sullenness, and disobedience as he tries to assert his independence. Then the death of both father and mother places him in charge of the family covered wagon and makes him the protector of seven brothers and sisters. How John grows in manhood as he faces dreadful hardships is shown in this true story of a pioneer family.

Woolley, Catherine. *David's Hundred Dollars*. Morrow 1951

In the book that precedes this one David has earned a reward for quick thinking and

heroic action. Now he discovers, as many adults have done, that he can't hold on to such riches. Little by little the money slips away, sometimes in foolish and sometimes in generous purchases, until David suddenly realizes that he has lost his chance to buy the bicycle he wants. Children from third grade on may find it easy to identify themselves with David.

Personal Fears

Enright, Elizabeth. *Kintu: A Congo Adventure*. Farrar and Rinehart 1935

Kintu, son of a chief, hides the shameful secret that he is afraid of the jungle. Helped by the witch doctor, he buries a magic charm, and after a night in the jungle during which he kills a leopard, loses his fear.

Paradis, Marjorie. *Timmy and the Tiger*. Harper 1952

Ten-year-old Timmy is a bundle of fears. When he moves from the city he hopes to leave his fears of the elevator, of the subway, of a bully, behind him—and he does, only to pick up many new fears. Timmy's struggle to rid himself of senseless fears is warmly told.

Sperry, Armstrong. *Call It Courage*. Macmillan 1948

Mafatu, son of a Polynesian chief, fears the sea which had claimed his mother's life. He is taunted by his companions for his cowardice. One night he musters enough courage to sail out of the lagoon, only to be swept miles away by a hurricane. In his fight to survive he finds the courage to meet and master many fears.

Treffinger, Carolyn. *Li Lun, Lad of Courage*. Abingdon-Cokesbury Press 1947

Li Lun's personal fear is the sea and the evil spirits swimming in the ocean's depths. Shocked and shamed by his son's fear, his fisherman father bids him plant seven grains of rice on the very top of Lao Shan, Sorrow Mountain. Sea gulls, parching sun, rains and mildew, and rats all conspire against the boy, but his courage and determination are rewarded by the seven-fold harvest demanded by his father.

Woolley, Catherine. *Schoolroom Zoo*. Morrow 1950

Ellie loves insects and animals so much that she cannot understand the fear of a classmate for snakes. Before the end of the story the fear has been overcome, and in addition Ellie has learned a valuable lesson in respecting the fears of others.

Physical Handicaps

Angelo, Valenti. *Hill of Little Miracles*. Viking 1942

This is the story of Ricco who was born with one leg shorter than the other. His faith and his courage, aided by the cobbler's special shoes, give him new hope and help him to make a happy adjustment. The story is lightened by the infectious friendliness of the Italian-Irish atmosphere of Telegraph Hill.

Craik, Dinah M. *The Little Lame Prince*. Macmillan 1923 edition

Although written many years ago, this classic story about the little prince who was injured in a fall and later cheated of his inheritance by his uncle is told with sweetness and simplicity. Aided by his fairy godmother, Prince Dolor learns to make the best of his handicap. The story has sentiment and sadness but possesses therapeutic value for the right child.

De Angeli, Marguerite. *The Door in the Wall*. Doubleday 1949

Robin's father is away fighting in the Scottish Wars; his mother is serving as a lady-in-waiting to the Queen. Deserted by servants who are fleeing from the plague, Robin catches the dread sickness, and is left crippled. Befriended by the good monks, Robin slowly learns to accept his handicap and finds recompense in other talents. This book does not end with a wonderful recovery.

Sawyer, Ruth. *Old Con and Patrick*. Viking 1946

Young Patrick, crippled by an attack of infantile paralysis, finds comfort in the strange friendship of a crippled bluejay. Considerate friends, a loving grandfather, and his own courageous fighting spirit help to pull Patrick through his hours of despair. This is another realistic book which does not end with a miraculous or dramatic recovery.

Williams, Henry Lionel. *Turi of the Magic Fingers*. Viking 1939

In saving his sister from a savage cave bear, Turi becomes crippled and must give up his hopes of becoming a mighty hunter. Turi knows that because of the savage laws of the tribe, he must make himself important to the cave men or die. Luckily he discovers a talent for carving and engraving and so wins in a contest with the Sorcerer.

Racial Insecurity

Bontemps, Arna. *Chariot in the Sky*. John C. Winston 1951

Although geared to the reading level of older children, this account of the struggles of Caleb the slave, the founders of Fisk University, and the famous Fisk Singers to win recognition is an engrossing story. It may be the right book for some sixth-grade child of superior reading ability who needs to identify himself with heroic members of his race.

De Angeli, Marguerite. *Bright April*. Doubleday 1946

Because of thoughtless remarks and acts a little Negro girl becomes conscious of her color. In following the motto of her Brownie Troop she wins the friendship of the white child who had resented her presence.

Eberle, Irmengrad. *The Very Good Neighbors*. Lippincott 1945

A Mexican family of sharecroppers who are living in the open on the outskirts of San Antonio find both enmity and friendship from nearby residents. Their cooperative efforts to build a house, their honest and cheerful courage, and their willingness to work bring a happy ending.

Hunt, Mabel Leigh. *Ladycake Farm*. Lippincott 1952

When a Negro family moves from the city to a small farm in a white neighborhood, the members need all the cheerful courage and dignity they possess. Little Joe faces difficulties in adjusting to the new school, but the family eventually wins the respect and admiration of their neighbors.

Means, Florence Crannell. *The Moved-Outers*. Houghton Mifflin 1945

This is a rather special book for superior readers because it deals with the problems of a respected Japanese-American family, moved from a comfortable home on the West Coast to inland camps. The manner in which they face their unjust treatment with courage and with the understanding that the action is the panicky reaction to Pearl Harbor, is admirably told.

Yates, Elizabeth. *Amos Fortune, Free Man*. Aladdin Books 1950

This true story of an African boy's hard life from the time he is kidnapped and sold as a slave until his death as a respected citizen of New Hampshire, is told with rare beauty. The sacrifices Amos made, his humility, integrity, and his innate goodness should be an inspiration to Negro and white children alike.

During a conference on Onomastics in Detroit, a small group of scholars voted to organize the American Name Society for the purpose of promoting and encouraging the study of place names, personal names and scientific and commercial nomenclature.

Elsdon C. Smith was elected President and Erwin G. Gudde was named Secretary-Treasurer. The American Name Society will endeavor to make the American people conscious of the interest and importance of names in all fields of human activity. Very little work has been done on the study of names and the field is almost a virgin one, waiting for students interested in study and research.

The Society will publish a quarterly journal devoted to articles about names written by members. The provisional title is: *NAMES, Journal of the American Name Society*. Later it is hoped to publish books, monographs, and, eventually, standard reference dictionaries.

The dues, including subscription to *Names*, are: Active Member, \$5.00; Sustaining Member, \$25.00; Library Member, \$5.00; and Patron, \$1,000.00. The first membership year will end December 31, 1953.

Dues and applications for membership should be sent to Professor Erwin G. Gudde, Treasurer, American Name Society, University of California Press, Berkeley 4, California.

Developing Study Skills In The Intermediate Grades

GEORGE W. BOND¹

Introduction

In the modern elementary school our program of academic experiences is geared heavily to learn through reading. We make a sincere effort to give students as many firsthand experiences as possible and we try to use concrete materials whenever possible, but the program continues to depend largely on learning from the printed page. The textbook then becomes one of the most important tools in our repertoire of learning techniques.

The proper use of a textbook involves much more than reading skill although reading ability is important. In addition to being able to read well a student must have sound study skills if he is to be successful academically. Reading and study skills become particularly important at the fourth grade level, because here the student leaves reading, writing, and arithmetic, and begins to study history, geography, English, health, science, and spelling. Even his arithmetic turns to written problems. Each textbook presents its own special difficulties so actually each textbook becomes a special tool which the student must learn to use correctly. For most students the degree of study facility attained is a result of trial and error without guidance or help from teachers or parents.

Today there are few secondary schools teaching students sound study skills in a systematic manner. I do not know of a

single elementary school where the teachers have a planned program for helping students learn to study efficiently. One reason for this serious deficiency is the fact that teachers themselves do not know sound study skills and thus cannot be expected to teach them to their students. It is the purpose of this paper to discuss a program which can be introduced at the intermediate grade level to help students establish a solid foundation for building sound study skills.

Part I: How To Master A Textbook Assignment

A textbook is a learning tool and as such should be placed in the hands of students with the proper methods for its correct use. Most textbooks are carefully written, well organized, and logically constructed. Each book is divided into chapters and each chapter presents a certain number of important new ideas. A check through textbooks widely used in the intermediate grades will disclose the average chapter contains about six important ideas. The remainder of the material in each chapter is there for the purpose of illustrating the main ideas so thoroughly that students with varieties of experiences and skill will be able to understand them. In mastering a textbook chapter three steps are necessary. We call these three steps: Warm up, Note Taking, and Remember-
¹Director of the reading center at the New York State Teachers College, New Paltz.

ing. Let us take each step separately and look at it in detail.

Warm Up

In a study situation the human mind behaves very much like a muscle. If we are to participate in an athletic event we first warm up the muscular system so it will respond quickly and smoothly when the contest begins. When a student is to participate in a study event he must learn to get his mind receptive if he is to understand and master the material. In warming up to an assignment the first procedure is to turn to the table of contents in the textbook and determine the relationship of the new assignment to past lessons and to future lessons. How does this chapter to be mastered fit into the total learning situation? The second procedure in warming up is to page through the new chapter. Look at and study all the pictures, charts, maps, diagrams, graphs, and material in italics. Obviously, not much is learned from the first two procedures, but they do serve to bring the mind to bear on the material to be mastered and to make the mind more receptive for learning. The third procedure is to read the questions and the summary at the end of the chapter. The summary will give the student a bird's-eye view of the chapter before he reads it.

Most students feel that questions at the end of a chapter are put there by authors to provide teachers with convenient material for homework assignments. They fail to realize questions are there because the authors feel specific questions bring out the high lights of a chapter. If we have our students look over the questions at the end of a chapter before they

begin reading, when they come to material which answers each question that material will stand out and take on its proper importance. Many of our modern textbook writers are realizing this fact and now start each new chapter with a list of challenging questions.

The fourth procedure in warming up is to read the entire chapter rather rapidly. If students are to see the whole rather than just isolated parts they must learn to read whole chapters at one time. As teachers we sometimes add to our students' study problems by making assignments which are not conducive to learning by wholes. During the reading of a chapter the only hesitations permitted occur when a new word is encountered. Students should be taught to make a small check (✓) in the book margin next to each line that contains a new word. Do not ask them to stop reading and look up new words in the dictionary for that destroys the previous warm up steps. At the same time, do not allow students to skip by new words, for vocabulary is basic to all reading comprehension. When a student encounters many unknown words in a reading assignment it is necessary for his teacher to help him find reading materials on an easier level.

It may seem strange that reading the chapter for the first time is classified here as part of the warm up. Most teachers consider the actual reading process as the mastery technique. Only when students understand material clearly and thoroughly and can retain information for future uses have they mastered it. Reading through an assignment one time is not sufficient effort to assure mastery of an assignment for most students.

Note Taking

When students learn to warm up for an assignment the second step in the mastery technique becomes note taking. We all forget. Forgetting is inevitable. If we tell our students about forgetting and teach them ways for overcoming forgetting we will be a long way toward helping them master their work. Review is essential to mastery and good notes provide the most convenient means to frequent review. Good notes for most textbook chapters can be restricted to one side of one sheet of standard notebook paper. The secret of good notes is consistency. In taking notes four procedures should always be followed. It was pointed out in procedure four of the warm up that all new words should be checked when reading a chapter. These new words now become procedure one in note taking. List all new words, look them up in the dictionary, write a definition for them, list synonyms, and study them in context. This is essential for comprehension and at the same time it provides a functional approach to vocabulary enrichment. New words a student encounters in his daily reading assignments are the words he must understand. Procedure two is to page through the chapter again and list the main ideas (usually about six per chapter). Students do not learn this technique through a lecture. Teachers must work with students doing several assignments together under close supervision before the students will learn how to select the main ideas. Procedure three is to take each main idea and turn it into a question. For example, the main idea might be, "Factors Which Led To The Civil War." The question then becomes, "What Factors Led To The Civil

War?" Procedure four is to answer each question in a student's own words. If a student cannot answer a question in his own words he must reread that section of a chapter and continue rereading until he can answer the question clearly and completely in his own words.

When notes on an assignment are completed students are ready for the final step of the mastery technique.

Remembering

Actually, students really do not begin to study until they reach the remembering stage. Warm up and note taking are necessary preliminaries to remembering. When tests are given or questions asked in class students cannot use their books or notebooks. The answers must come from their minds so I believe students do not study until they begin to practice how to remember. Few of us ever learn to use our retentive abilities efficiently. It is possible to help young students develop the ability to remember. The following suggestions should prove quite helpful.

(a) Review frequently. When students learn to identify the five or six important ideas in each chapter and to take notes in the manner already discussed, review becomes easy for them. It takes just a few minutes each evening to go back over a previous day's notes and refresh one's mind on material covered. Distributed review is very important to remembering.

(b) Overlearning. When a student has mastered an assignment—really mastered it—he should take a few minutes rest and then spend ten or fifteen minutes more on the assignment. This process we

call overlearning. It is one of the most important study skills to use, for an extra ten or fifteen minutes can increase ability to remember as much as fifty per cent.

(c) Recitation. Numerous uncomplimentary remarks are made about people who talk to themselves, yet, recitation, which involves talking to one's self, is an excellent study technique for remembering. When we learn to recite our daily lessons we strengthen our auditory memory and use another sense. Students should be encouraged to recite materials which are important for recitation strengthens memory.

(d) Learn by wholes. The teacher who constantly assigns part of a chapter as a lesson makes it quite difficult for students to remember. They fail to see the chapter as a whole unit. Some students can recall many facts from such assignments, but are unable to determine the relationship among them. By making long range assignments we can encourage students to learn by wholes, make it easier for them to plan their study time, and help them remember important facts.

In mastering a textbook assignment the following outline should be followed.

Warm Up

- (a) Turn to the table of contents and determine the relationship of the new chapter to past and future assignments.
- (b) Page through the chapter and look at the maps, pictures, graphs, diagrams, illustrations, etc.
- (c) Read the summary and questions at the end of the chapter.

- (d) Read the chapter rather rapidly and check (✓) all new words.

Notes

- (a) List new words, look them up, and study them.
- (b) Identify the main ideas (usually about six per chapter) and list them.
- (c) Turn each main idea into a question.
- (d) Answer the questions in your own words.

Remembering

- (a) Review frequently.
- (b) Overlearn important ideas.
- (c) Recite your lessons.
- (d) Learn by wholes.

Part II: How To Take Examinations

For the student who follows the above outline in studying each new assignment a surprise quiz is never difficult. He also finds that preparing for a six weeks test or a semester final is not difficult and does not involve cramming or "burning the midnight oil." However, just because a student has studied systematically does not guarantee he will show his best ability on a written examination. What is a test? It is an academic competition between a teacher and her students with everything on the teacher's side. She can ask any question she desires to ask and students are supposed to know the answer. Perhaps we can put some advantages over on the students' side by teaching them how to take tests. Examinations are of two types. One we call objective and the other we call subjective. Let us look at each type separately to see what is involved for the student.

Objective Examinations

In this type test we may find true-false questions, completion questions, multiple choice questions, and/or perhaps matching questions. In taking an objective test several things should come to mind immediately. (a) Each question usually has the same value. This means students should be taught to work through a test and first answer all questions they are sure of. (b) In most tests there is an overlapping of questions. By working through the entire test certain questions may give clues as to the answers to other questions. (c) After doing all the questions known, a student must know how the test is to be scored before he can proceed intelligently. If the score is to be the number correct, then students must be taught to answer all questions—even if they must guess to do so. If the score is to be the number of questions correct minus a fraction of the number incorrect, attempting unknown questions must be done cautiously. When the score is to be the number correct minus the number incorrect, attempting unknown questions is dangerous.

Discussions with many intermediate grade children each year lead me to believe that almost without exception they fail to point their thinking when taking a test. Their minds tend to behave like a top. In thinking about a specific question they allow their thinking to go round and round saying to themselves, "What do I know?" "What do I know?" We must teach students to point their thinking, i. e. send their mind to specific locations for information. Say to the mind, "What is in my notebook about this question?" or "What did we say about this in our class discussions?" When students learn to con-

trol their thinking and send their mind to specific locations for information they are pointing their thinking which is vitally important in taking examinations.

Subjective Examinations

In the intermediate grades teachers are using fewer and fewer subjective type tests. This is most unfortunate for subjective tests give a strong measure of individual differences and also help students develop facility in written language. It will help if teachers take time to teach their students how to take subjective tests.

Frequently I have noticed that when a teacher hands out a subjective test most students begin to write within two or three minutes from the time they receive their paper. It is a rare person who can think well and write well at the same time. If we can convince students of this fact they have no choice but to think first and then write. Each question must be read carefully and then outlined on scratch paper. If a choice of questions is given, all should be outlined before any are eliminated. By pointing their thinking to their notebooks, textbooks, and class discussions, students can jot down the important facts they know about each question in a relatively short time. When the facts are listed they should be studied and arranged in logical sequence. When this is done students can concentrate on punctuation, grammatical construction, and correct spelling. The secret to taking a subjective test is planning. Do your thinking first, jot down your ideas, organize your ideas logically, and then write your answers.

Summary

It is not the writer's intention to imply that this paper discusses the only way for
(Continued on Page 413)

Pronunciation

LEE S. HULTZEN¹

For any teacher who has to deal with language, including every teacher in the elementary schools, the must book is Robert Hall's *Leave Your Language Alone*.² Linguistically sound and—something of a miracle in linguistic writing—written to be understood. If you have read or will read Hall, there's no point to your reading further here. But this will not do as a substitute for Hall. Nor should you accept Hall's thesis, "Leave your [and everybody else's] language alone," without reading his book.

It is, of course, obvious that the whole setup of the school system demands that you not leave the language of children alone. One of the principal articles in the attack on precollege education, currently enjoying a cycle of prominence in the pages of the popular as well as academic press, is that students come from each lower level of the schools unable to write (and speak) their language well. Whether or not the accusation will stand up on examination, the assumption that teachers are responsible for the state of student language is unchallenged.

You cannot teach language as you teach arithmetic because children already have their language when they come to school. Everyone has his language, whether he goes to school or not. His language is just as much a part of him, although he gets it in another way, as his physical make-up. His language (linguists call it

¹Associate Professor, Speech Research Laboratory, Department of Speech, University of Illinois.

²Linguistica, Box 619, Ithaca, N. Y.

his idiolect) is different from your language (your idiolect). Sometimes the language of his speech-community (dialect to the linguist) is different from the language of your speech-community (your dialect): no better and no worse, only different.

The fact that children already have their language, as fully developed as their bodies, when they come to school suggests that the teacher should deal with a child's language as a physician deals with his body. The physician does nothing to interfere with the development of a healthy body; the teacher should do nothing to interfere with a healthy language. The physician, when he detects unhealth, interprets symptoms and applies appropriate remedy to the best of his ability and calls in a specialist if the case is beyond him; the teacher should detect language disorder, apply such appropriate remedy as he is qualified to apply, and refer the too difficult case to a specialist. In order to get to know what is health and what disease, the physician undergoes a rigid discipline in the study of medicine; before he passes any judgment, the teacher should get to know what is and what is not healthy language.

For the rest of this discussion I shall consider in some detail one comparatively simple aspect of language with which all teachers have to concern themselves, pronunciation. I shall say nothing about voice and shall refer only incidentally to what are known as disorders of speech. I cannot provide the material for understand-

ing; I only hope to point the direction in which understanding is to be found.

DIALECT. While dictionaries and playwrights sometimes find it convenient to refer to certain types of pronunciation as dialectal, it must be borne in mind that everyone speaks a dialect. English is not a fixed language from which, say, Southern dialect and the Harvard accent are deviations. The only reality in language is what the people do. Southern dialect is a pattern of speech discovered by listening to the talk of people who live in the South; the Harvard accent is another pattern, discovered by listening to the talk of Harvard men native to the region and of some other Harvard men who have unconsciously or consciously adapted themselves. What we call English is a generalization about the patterns of speech of Southern, Harvard, and hundreds of other dialects. There is no English spoken that is not a dialect.

The pronunciation of one dialect is, as language, just as good as that of any other. The only basis for preference must be nonlinguistic; in most cases it is the social prestige of the speakers of the favored dialect. If you interfere with the dialect of any child you should realize that you are making social judgments, not language judgments. It might be worth while to glance at two possibilities of interference with a child's dialect: "correction" of the local dialect and insistence on conformity with the local dialect. It is not worth while to discuss class, as distinguished from regional, dialects, because what little there is of class distinction in American speech rarely involves pronunciation.

The first possibility can arise only when the teacher speaks a dialect different from that of his pupils. The teacher's dialect may be the one he learned as a child in another locality or one he has more or less deliberately acquired later in life, in either case one for which he may be expected to have considerable affection. If, however, he attempts to impose that dialect on his pupils, he says in effect: "The people of this community are contemptible. The people who speak my dialect are superior. I consider it my duty to help you to rid yourselves of the odium of connection with this community so that you may pass in the discriminating world as respectable." Self-respecting members of the community would be quite within their rights in objecting to the person of such a teacher, not so much for the specific act of teaching as for the attitude toward the community of which that act is a sign. If by chance, not at all an impossibility, some members of the community should request such interference with the local dialect, the self-respecting teacher would do well to explain to them that no man was ever made better by reform of his dialect, that the respectability of its speakers makes a dialect respectable and not vice versa.

The second possibility, insistence on conformity with the local dialect, arises when some of the pupils come from other-dialect speaking communities, typically children whose parents have recently moved into the area from other parts of the country or from non-English speaking countries. Here noninterference is advisable on quite other grounds. The child will learn the local dialect far more rapidly and better from his fellow pupils than he will

from the teacher. There is ample evidence that the "natural" way of learning language is largely from other children, not from adults and perhaps especially not from teachers. There may occasionally be a newcomer who is disturbed by his difference from other children and comes to the teacher for help; he should be helped, and if his difficulty is such as to need expert attention he should be referred to the speech correctionist. There may now and then be one who, with or without home backing, insists on retaining his nonlocal dialect; he had better be let alone, although in some cases the social, not linguistic but social, consequences might well be explained to him or his parents.

The special situation where large numbers of the pupils have non-English backgrounds and English has pretty much to be taught as a foreign language is one that demands specially trained teachers and need not concern us here.

WORDS. If the dialect is untouchable, it would be well to define the scope of the dialect. This we may conveniently do in terms of words or types of words, the things which are entered in dictionaries, even if they may not turn up in actual speech as separate units. We may make a distinction between what are nowadays known as form-words or function words and what are in contrast called content words. The form-words are the structure building words used to put together English sentences, in traditional terms the articles, conjunctions, prepositions, pronouns, auxiliary verbs, and some adverbs. Content words are the others, principally the nouns, adjectives, main verbs, and nonstructural adverbs. In the sentence,

"Most probably a bad boy's been taking the books from the room," *Most*, *a*, *'s*, *been*, *the*, *from*, and *the* represent form-words; *probably*, *bad*, *boy*, *taking*, *books*, and *room* represent content words.

The vocabulary of the local dialect must include all the form-words of the language. Every first-grade child may be expected to have at his command most of these words. The last few, such as *nevertheless*, *whenever*, *awfully*, he will learn shortly, and surely without any help as to pronunciation. Where the pronunciation of form words does often present a problem is at higher levels of education and for adults. The problem never arises because the words were wrongly learned in the first place—only because someone, probably a teacher, at some time insisted on an unnaturally elaborate sounding out, as though the speaker were identifying the word rather than saying something. The article *a* should rhyme with *hay* only before breakfast on the twenty-ninth of February; if *have* usually sounds exactly like *of* everybody will be happy. (Such an abnormality as rhyming *with* with *if* is not a matter of pronunciation, but a problem for the speech correctionist.)

The vocabulary of the local dialect also includes, of course, a large number of content words, those which are in use for daily communication among members of the community. The child's part of this vocabulary at any particular time contains such of these words as he and his age-fellows have learned to use. Because the stimuli for conditioning the pronunciation come from the usage which is the authority for the pronunciation, there is seldom any problem. Social pressures will

iron out the eccentricities.

There are other content words, however, which schooling or his own venturesomeness puts into the child's mouth without providing proper monitors. Some are words the child comes upon before his time; some are words for which the local dialect has no norms. Mostly they are words got from books without other guide to pronunciation than unreliable English spelling. Here the teacher should give aid freely and authoritatively, and for the latter group, words outside the local dialect, pronouncing dictionaries have their only utility.

PRONOUNCING DICTIONARIES. A pronouncing dictionary, any dictionary which indicates pronunciation, is only so good as the observation of its editors is acute and extensive. The dictionary-makers only observe and record, at least in theory; they do not dictate out of an authority vested in them. Some are better than others. The best is probably the Kenyon-Knott *Pronouncing Dictionary of American English*,³ where the focus of attention of unquestionably competent editors is on pronunciation. But even the best dictionary must be used with discretion.

It must, for instance, be understood that all alternative pronunciations of a word are used by highly respectable people. One should not suggest to a child that he give up a pronunciation listed second or third in favor of that listed first, which may indeed be first only because printing demands succession. When the child has no pronunciation or one not generally recognized, the first listed will do for most words, e. g., for *ideology*, which a child

³G. and C. Merriam, Springfield, Mass.

may nowadays come onto before this time. But conformity with the phonetic structure of the dialect has to be taken into consideration and calls for some comment.

The principal differences in pronunciation between one dialect and another in this country, accounting for most of the alternative pronunciations in the dictionaries, are in vowel qualities. Each dialect has its own structural pattern of vowels, observable in the pronunciation of the live words of its familiar vocabulary. This is the pattern to be extended to the pronunciation of unfamiliar words. Three examples may clarify:

The pronunciation of "long *u*" after *t*, *d*, *l*, *n*, or *th* will be set for the dialect by such common words as *due* and *new*, and the corresponding pronunciation among the three shown should be offered for *dupe* and *nuclear* if and when these words have to be dealt with.

Some dialects distinguish between *four* and stressed *for* and other dialects do not; if a child gets to *hoarse* ahead of his fellows, he should be advised to pronounce it like or different from *horse* according to the dialect pattern, not according to order of listing. And so later with *Borneo*.

The third example is more complicated. There is much variation in patterning among words which may be pronounced with any of three vowels, that as in *father*, that as in *saw*, or one between these in quality. The Kenyon-Knott dictionary as a rule shows all three possibilities, and so ordered as to suggest grouping, for example of *dog* with *log*, *fog* with *bog*. Unfortunately these groupings do not hold for all dialects and when it comes to extending the vowel pattern of a particular

dialect to rare words not really in the dialect there are complications. Thus the dictionary lists the same pattern of all three vowels for *doggerel* as for *dog* but only the first two for the less uncommon word *dogged*. Surely if the dialect has the third, "much less freq.," vowel (as in *father*) for *dog*, that vowel will do for *dogged*. Similarly, if the first-listed vowel for *log* (as in *saw*) will do for *logarithm*, where it is shown, it will do for *logos*, where it is not shown.

What I am trying to say in these paragraphs is that, while the entries for less common words in the best dictionary may represent the actual usage of people who handle those words comfortably, the choice among pronunciations for a speaker whose dialect vocabulary does not include these words is properly determined by the phonetic structure of his dialect, and sometimes that phonetic structure may indicate a pronunciation not listed.

A similar principle applies in some cases where the entry does not specify alternatives, notably for the affixes of compounds. If the pronunciation shown for the affix in the entry for the compound word does not fit in with the dialect structure, one should look at the variants noted for the affix as a separate entry, e. g., *de-*, *pre-*, *-ed*, *-ment*, *-ness*.

Fortunately the dictionary is sufficiently reliable and easily interpreted for the fairly numerous shibboleths of accentuation. If a youngster wants to use *preferable* and *lamentably* he ought to know that one doesn't merely add something to *prefer* and *lament*. Here order of variants, as for *exquisite* or *inexplicable*, may decide which to suggest at first learning, but does

not justify rejection of an established second-listed.

THE FLOW OF SPEECH. The notion of word is convenient for such discussion as that in the previous sections, but it would be most unfortunate to think of spoken language, the only real language, as simply a succession of words. It is in fact quite impossible to mark off words on the basis of hearing alone. *Apiece* sounds exactly like *a piece* and there are no more boundaries in *fill a bucket* than in *filibuster*. One must run his words together to speak English.

This continuous flow of speech has some effect on pronunciation in English, not so much as for some other languages. To take one of the most conspicuous examples, the succession of form-words *do not you* is very different from *do* plus *not* plus *you*. Part of this difference is reflected in spelling, and *don't you* is considered the proper way to write conversation. The other part of the difference is no less proper, and such a spelling as *doncha* actually reflects, not a careless or vulgar pronunciation, but the real speech of the best people when they are communicating in English.

Recognition of the absurdity of word-by-word pronunciation is not the same as endorsement of what is currently burlesqued under the label "Slurvian," e. g., *Journey money?* as an inquiry about compensation. Some cases of Slurvianism require expert doctoring; the cure for the mild cases is in recognition of the time rhythm of the language. It is not necessary that every speech sound be heard with the same distinctness; indeed it impedes communication to have unimportant elements

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Handwriting Up To Date

DOROTHY H. STEWART¹

Writing does not begin the first day of school, perhaps not for many days or weeks. However, the child sees the teacher write on the board or on charts and becomes aware of the reason for writing—that marks record thoughts. He also learns that writing is from left to right. Then comes the best motivation of all—the child wants to write because he has something to say. Probably before this time, he has shown a readiness to learn to write because he has scribbled with a crayon or pencil and called it writing. What little child has not made marks at the end of a letter his mother wrote, saying that he too had written a letter? In school, he perhaps first of all learns to write his name from a copy that is put before him. But the first real writing that he does should be large and free, and for that reason, the chalkboard is perhaps the best place to begin, a place at which children can make big letters. Here it is easy for them to master coordination. Not all children will be ready to write at the same time because of lack of readiness or coordination. To force them may develop emotional difficulties—gentle leading is better. Forming letters in the air also helps the hand to go where the child wants it to. This is followed by the use of large unlined paper at first, to be replaced later by paper with wide spaces. After this, two spaces of narrower width may be used, the lower one for the small letters and two spaces for the tall letters. This will be used until the teacher sees that the child has mastered the form of his letters and then the size may be

narrowed. The two spaces will be used most generally in the first grade, to be followed by one large space in second grade which will again be narrowed as the child is able to adjust to it. The desired outcome is not perfection—but legibility which leads toward perfection. In the beginning, large pencils are generally used, although there is a feeling by some that this is not important. However, might not small pencils tend to make small writing which defeats the aims of beginning teaching. When children begin to write, parents are so delighted that they also want to help, and consequently often take the child beyond what he is learning in school—and since parents' way of making letters is often not the same as what is being taught, confusion may result. It is much better for the parents to visit school, see what is going on, but leave the instruction to the teacher.

Beginning Writing Should Be Simple

It is well recognized today that beginning writing should be simple, easy to perform and read, and that the symbol of reading and writing should be as nearly alike as possible—one alphabet which will facilitate both. Manuscript writing, which is a form of writing, and not printing, is the answer to this problem. Surveys that have been made show that nearly 90% of the schools use manuscript in the first grade. This type of writing came first from private schools in England and spread

¹Consultant in Elementary Education, Newton Public Schools, Newtonville 60, Massachusetts.

rapidly. It is based on straight lines and circles—easy to make, and easy to read.

The Child and His Curriculum by J. Murray Lee and Doris May Lee,² explains on p. 428, the values of manuscript writing:

1. It is easy for children to learn because of the simple strokes.

2. Children can obtain satisfactory results early without drill on movement or form.

3. The letter forms are so simple that each child can see his difficulty and correct it.

4. The child learns one alphabet for both reading and writing.

5. Even a child with poor muscular control can produce readable results.

6. Manuscript writing facilitates children's work in beginning reading.

7. Children who have written manuscript for a number of years can equal the speed of those using cursive writing and in most cases exceed it.

Too often, parents ask, "When is Johnnie going to learn to write?" not recognizing that manuscript is writing. Number 4 above, the statement about one alphabet, should be emphasized, for too often adults who are not teachers do not realize that the letters in the book and the letters of cursive writing give the child two different alphabets to master, and that he must translate what he reads into another means of expression when he writes it. With manuscript, he writes almost exactly as he reads. Manuscript is less fatiguing because it is written one letter at a time with no joining stroke to make extra work. There is no question of the value of manuscript writing for the beginning child, and some people feel so strongly the value of it, that children continue to use it all through their elementary

²D. Appleton-Century Crofts, 2nd ed., 1950.

school work. The beauty and legibility of the written page when well done, outshines that of the cursive writing.

Manuscript vs. Cursive

As was previously stated, manuscript writing is now in use in most of the first grades of our schools. There is always a question where the change to cursive should be made, if it is to be made. It must be remembered that nothing should be discarded until some approach to skill in its use is reached. To teach manuscript one year, and then change to cursive seems to the writer too soon, since it has not allowed the child to become familiar enough with the form and the ease of writing to allow him to use it as a tool to get his thoughts on paper with ease. To change too soon, cuts the delight in creative writing, for one must always be thinking about the manner in which one writes what he is thinking and this delays getting thoughts on the page. In *The Language Arts in the Elementary School* by Ruth Strickland, she says, "Second grade appears to a number of people too early to add cursive writing for two main reasons: 1. Children still have not developed enough muscular skill to make cursive writing easy and the time spent in learning it at this level is excessive. 2. Children have only just reached the stage in which they can enjoy manuscript writing as a tool, and they are beginning to be prolific writers because they enjoy doing imaginative and other types of writing. Adding a new form at this time cuts off the interest in creative writing just as it is beginning to flower and makes the whole problem of writing more difficult than it has any need to be. By fourth grade, children can swing

³D. C. Heath, 1951.

into cursive writing with greater ease and still retain their interest in writing."³ The foregoing statement makes clear the modern viewpoint on manuscript writing. It must be remembered, however, that not all children will be ready to begin the cursive at the same time, depending on muscular control, and the teacher must be well aware of the individual differences in ability to write. The end of the third year or the beginning of the fourth year seems to the writer a time when most children will have attained some degree of skill in manuscript writing and should be ready to change to the cursive. It is, however, too bad at this point to toss out the form that has been used and begin to learn a different one when instead, it is possible to develop the cursive form by adding tails on the manuscript letters and simple joinings which before long turn into cursive writing by itself. There is one system of handwriting which works on this basis—that manuscript through a series of simple changes becomes cursive writing.⁴ Here, nothing is lost, but rather a developmental method has been used. It is well recognized that manuscript is definitely easier for the left handed child in a world of right handed writers, is easier for him to learn, and easier for him to execute—avoiding the crab-like position that cursive writing sometimes fosters in the left handed.

There is a growing movement to retain manuscript and not change to cursive. One city with which the writer is familiar is now using manuscript in the upper elementary grades—having developed it one grade each year until it has reached its

⁴Stone-Smalley system of handwriting, Scribner's.

present level. The writing is beautiful, neat, legible, and swift. In another instance, a junior high school protested when children came to it, writing only manuscript, but when the reasons for its use were explained, and the legibility of papers was experienced (and enjoyed) the teacher asked to have children from this particular school continue manuscript. It is perhaps adults who struggle most against the continued use of manuscript in the grades for they feel that children are not able to read letters written to them by members of the family. Most schools that teach manuscript beyond the early grades, also teach children how to read cursive, and generally many directions on the board are written in both forms. Too often, adults think of manuscript as printing and not writing. Perhaps custom is the greatest barrier—because something has been found good, and used for a long time—no change should take place. If manuscript is to be retained, it should be referred to as writing. The needs of the child and the evidence of research should be the determining factor.

Definite Lessons in Writing

It is important that definite lessons in writing be given until the point of skill has been reached. Research assures us that fifteen minutes a day of concentrated work will develop good penmanship if the same care and attention is given to writing done at other times. In the past, too much time was spent on drill for the sake of drill. The results are evident by the way people write after they leave school. Many adults have spent hours in school in drill and yet their later writing does not warrant the amount of time spent on it—time that might have

been more wisely used. Neither does their adult writing indicate the amount of labor that went into it nor the perfection they once attained. Perfection lasts only while drill lasts. Again proof lies in the fact that the quality of writing done by high school and college students who had daily drill periods for handwriting in the elementary school is little or no better than the quality of writing of those who did not have such drill. The best teaching of writing recognizes the individual needs of the child and puts emphasis on correction. Is it important for the entire class to practice together on the letter T when half of the class can already make it satisfactorily? Is it not better after examining the papers of children to determine what the individual specific need is and work on that. After the formation of letters is mastered, the problem that each works on may be his own individual one, at a specific time when others are also giving attention to writing. The same care must be applied to all writing the child does. Points to emphasize are letter formation, size, slant, spacing and general appearance of the paper.

It is necessary to recognize that everyone has two kinds of writing which he uses at different times. First, there is the kind one does when he is making a list, personal notes, or some hurried writing. This is not for inspection—it serves as a

reminder—and as such is not expected to be the best that the individual can do. The second kind is for exhibition—for others to read, and may be in the form of a letter, or something copied—writing which has not been hurried. At such time, perfection can be expected, for one has been able to put his very best effort into it. Especially in the middle grades and beyond, should this point be recognized, for here it is that more and more writing is done, and the burden becomes greater. Therefore, recognition for the need of two kinds of writing becomes more urgent.

Rapid writing is not always the mark of a good thinker. The bright child is often a poor writer because he has so many ideas to get on paper that his fingers will not fly fast enough. An excellent example of this is the doctor's prescription which many times is so illegible. The bright child is not concerned with his form, but rather what he is writing. The slower child is willing to labor over his work—willing to do routine tasks patiently, but although the writing may be beautiful, often the content is not unusual. Speed is not the end product of writing, for it is important to remember the point stressed earlier in this article—writing must be the tool of the user and what he has to say is more important than the perfection with which it is written.

Rhyme Or Reason?

MARY B. GIRDON¹

"Rain go away.
Come back some other day
Because the boys and girls
Want to play in the sand
And maybe go barefooted all day long."

The teacher softly read the poem which Faye had written. Faye had repeated part of an old nursery rhyme, but the teacher never mentioned it to Faye. She was reading Faye's last two lines again.

"Have you ever walked barefooted in the sand?" asked the teacher. "Was it raining? How did the rain and sand feel?"

Faye understood. In a short while, she came back with these lines—

I like to walk
Barefooted in the rain.
When the water runs under my feet,
It feels like ants running back and forth
On the bottoms of my feet.

Catherine had an experience in writing similar to Faye's. At first, in familiar rhyming lines, she wrote about the spring rain. After she stood by the window and watched the rain and clouds, she wrote—

Raindrops are coming down
Like silver needles—
Making a gray coat
For the clouds.

It was very difficult for Catherine to forget rhyme. Her poems usually sounded like verses from greetings cards. About city lights she said,

"Lights in the city
Are very pretty,
(Don't you think?)
The way they blink.
They shine and gleam,
(While I stand there and dream.)"

"You have a good idea for a poem, Catherine," the teacher remarked. "Have you watched the lights at night? What do the hundreds of lights in the city remind you of? Forget about rhyme and tell just how the lights over the city look to you."

Later, Catherine wrote:

Lights in the city
Are very pretty.
The way they twinkle
They remind me of stars—
Big ones and little ones,
Shining and blinking
In the night.

Kate was usually one of the first to complete assigned work. She liked to spend her spare time reading or writing. She was untiring in her efforts to write poems and stories for her classmates to enjoy. To Kate, a poem was several rhyming lines. In one of her first poems, she wrote:

The sun is very bright.
It shines every night.
The sun makes flowers grow
And makes people grow, too.

Both Kate and the teacher laughed about the sun shining every night. Kate wasn't being scientific when she wrote her poem. She was making the lines rhyme.

The teacher began trying to find Kate's interests. She found that Kate enjoyed flowers and trees and being out-of-doors, so the teacher suggested that she might enjoy writing about nature.

Kate immediately walked to the bookcase to observe the bowl of pink hyacinths. Then she wrote a sentence of description:

¹Teacher in Lee School, Alexandria, Virginia.

"The pink flowers smell like the cough medicine box."

Now Kate was writing from experience! She stood by the window and watched the tall trees in the yard across the street. She said, "The leaves on the trees look like hands to me and the trunks look like bodies."

"Kate, why do the leaves look like hands?" asked the teacher.

"The wind is blowing them," answered Kate. "It seems like they are waving to me."

"Write about the leaves and the wind," said the teacher encouragingly.

Kate wrote:

The leaves on a tree
Look like hands
The wind blows softly
And the leaves wave to me.

Some weeks later, Kate decided to write about the roses. Again, she struggled with rhyme and reason. At first, she wrote:

The flowers look like silk slips
hanging in a bunch.
The roses are red and the violets
are blue.
I like them and I hope you do, too.

After several attempts at writing, Kate remarked, "The roses look like the slips ladies used to wear long ago. But they didn't call them slips. They called them petticoats."

The teacher and Kate looked at the ruffled edges of the pink, silken petals. Sure enough, when the rose was turned down one could almost see the billowy skirt of a colonial lady.

Kate quickly wrote:

Roses look like petticoats
Ladies wore to the ball,
Petticoats all puffed out.

Dorothy, an above-average child academically, also wrote rhyming lines. She, too, sacrificed meaning and feeling for the sake of rhyme.

About the fairies, she wrote:

A fairy is an airy creature
In figure, voice, and every feature.
Beautiful and light as a feather,
They all dance merrily together.

To this poem, Dorothy had added:

Fairies twinkle in the blue
Everything fairies say is true.

How different Don's poem entitled

"My Fairy" was!

Someday I would like to see
A fairy or an elf—
Maybe two or three.
What would they look like?
What would they do?
Maybe to them
I'd be something new.
I think a fairy
Might be like a flower,
Something that I'd
Like to watch by the hour.
But I know a fairy
As sweet as can be.
You see, my mother is a fairy to me.

How little meaning Jon's poem entitled "Birds" gave the reader!

Birds so high up in the air
Make lots of hair.
When the birds go
They feel so cold.

After lying in bed and listening to the rain dripping on the roof, William wrote:

When the rain hits on my house roof,
It sounds like an old man coming
Down the street with his dog.
The old man walks slowly
The dog runs along before his master.
William wrote with feeling because

he had experienced listening to rain on the roof. The teacher helped her fifth grade group to realize the importance of making a word picture in a poem or of leaving a thought or a feeling with the reader. She helped the group to see the value of writing about things that they had actually ex-

perienced. Rhyme soon held an insignificant place in the writing of these young children. It was depth of meaning and feeling that was commended. A spark of originality was carefully picked from trite lines and eagerly encouraged. Often the spark grew!

DEVELOPING STUDY SKILLS IN THE INTERMEDIATE GRADES

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students to study. The purpose of the paper is to suggest one plan for helping students establish sound study skills. Certainly not all the suggestions made can be developed fully in the intermediate grades. But, the logical place to begin is the intermediate grade level. If elementary teachers

will forget subject matter for a few class periods weekly and devote that time to teaching study techniques, their efforts will pay huge academic dividends to their students, and to all teachers throughout the entire school system.

PRONUNCIATION

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as prominent as important. It is not even necessary that every speech sound be heard. But it is necessary for efficient communication that the information-bearing elements be properly spaced, that they come at the intervals fixed by the structure, the accent and rhythm, of the language.

The great need for dealing with, as

distinguished from using, language is understanding of linguistic structure and of the particular language-dialect. Unfortunately the Latin grammar which has long dominated the teaching of English has prevented understanding. Recent investigations by properly trained linguistic scholars are now making the understanding possible.

Rip Van Winkle: Study of a Legend

SUGGESTIONS FOR AN APPROACH

MARY B. DEATON¹

Washington Irving was probably one of the most delightful bachelor uncles that a boy or girl ever had, and he had many nieces and nephews. The story of Rip Van Winkle is one he may have told to the large household of young people. Perhaps he had first heard the story himself when he was a boy, and from the old Dutch settlers who half believed it. As a youth he, like his hero Rip, rambled far from home, sometimes into the country, sometimes down to the wharves where he watched the ships come and go and where he might hear tall tales from the seamen.

Like his hero, Rip, he left home—New York—and stayed away in Europe many years so that when he returned to his native land, he was not sure that he liked the changes he found. Certainly some strange things had happened while he was away.

For Studying the Story

- I. Read the story as rapidly as possible to find out what happens.

Look up the word *legend*, and notice how the author mixes the real and the unreal, the legendary character and episode and the real geographical setting.

- II. Now examine more closely some parts of the story to discover some of the skill that went into the telling.

It is partly the story itself, but partly also the author's skill in the telling that has made this tale a favorite for many generations.

A. Introduction: *the Setting*

How does the first sentence suggest reality?

This sentence is a sort of introduction, inviting the listener, "Come hear my story."

How does the second sentence emphasize the real?

What word in the first paragraph casually suggests the unreal that is to come? (*magical*)

What word in the second paragraph does the same? (*fairy*)

Rip Van Winkle, the Main Character

Why does Irving spend time telling about Rip's family?

Why does he want you to like Rip? How does he manage his telling so that you do? Do we envy Rip's good natured, easy-going way? Do you know another Rip in today's comics? (Winnie Winkle's father)

The Village and the People

Were they more like Rip or like his wife? Would they believe such a tale as he told?

¹Wisconsin State College at Superior.

B. The Story Proper

The events begin when Rip begins that "long ramble."

Why is autumn a fitting season for the beginning of this episode? (Hunting season? When nature begins to go to sleep?)

Was Rip the kind of man who would appreciate the landscape, "the lordly Hudson... majestic," etc? Or is this as we and Irving (reader and author) would see it? Justify your answer.

Perhaps Rip really dropped off to sleep right here where one sentence begins, "Panting and fatigued..." Then all he saw would be a part of his dream. Just as he dropped off to sleep he heard the harsh cawing of the crow, and this may have suggested the harsh voice of Mrs. Van Winkle calling him.

Study the description of the stranger and the odd looking men playing nine pins. Our dreams are often influenced or mixed with real things in life. Was it the old Flemish painting that now mingled in his dream and suggested the odd looking men? See if you can find copies of some Flemish paintings somewhere.

C. The Conclusion

The story says that Rip fell asleep after "repeated trips to the flagon." He may have carried a small flagon with him, and tasted it too often, for "he was naturally a thirsty soul," said Irving.

Can you tell what season it is?

The Awakening and the Changed Village

What change has come over the village? Are the people not only different people, but unlike the old inhabitants he had known?

In what various ways was his story accepted? Did all believe him? What happened as he continued to tell the story of his adventure? Explain why.

What legend did old Peter Vanderdonk tell to substantiate (corroborate) Rip's story? Did he consider it a legend? Do you? Can you prove one legend by another?

III. Are there any legends about your home community? Do you know tales about a more energetic legendary figure in America—Paul Bunyan? Do you know a boy named Huckleberry Finn, who seems as if he might be a great, great grandson of Rip Van Winkle?

Experience Charts in Primary Reading

MARY FREY KERSTING¹

The Experience Chart Approach. One of the recent developments in the field of teaching reading is the use of experience charts. These charts record the actual experiencing of the child in his daily activities at home, at school, and at play. The teacher transfers the actual business and pleasure of the child into symbolic form. The child finds himself self-stimulated to interpret the symbols in order to satisfy his needs and purposes, as well as his curiosity. He finds security in being able to readily understand the content of the charts since they are written in his own terminology and at his own level of understanding. He has a healthy pride in authoring the material, and assumes a willing responsibility in being able to interpret its symbolization. The delight the child experiences by having his own talk put on paper must be similar to the inner glow a musician must experience when his first recording is played back to him. The child responds to the life within his charted story. He may symbolically relive it at will. Interpretation of symbols, which is reading, becomes a rewarding desirable attainment.

Children are especially attracted by this form of chart presentation. Who has not seen small ones standing starry-eyed in front of a circus poster, tracing the letters of the words. "What does it say! What does it say!" They would give their best treasure for the ability to read those magical symbols. Comes the day for their own circus, their charts conjured up as a blend of their own imagination and the com-

mercial examples have ingenious clarity and appeal. Some of the best beginning reading tools for home use may be found on food containers such as cereal boxes and ice-cream cartons. The large-printed names of the contents—together with the short, crisp legends in chart form—incorporate skills of reading, spelling, and often a self-learned lesson in health. The cereal with an often added box-top appeal, the vanilla, chocolate or strawberry ice cream are within the experience of the child, and he wants to know what it says!

The proverbial saying; "Experience is the best teacher," may be trite, but in most cases it is of tried and true application. Experience clarifies, counsels, and cures. Experience is justification of past mistakes as a criterion for future actions. Experience is a personal confessional that is self-upbraiding, but permissive of reappraisal based on learning consequences. Experience lends reality, promotes investigation, and affords the comfort of understanding.

The experience of a child is his little "book of knowledge" to which he constantly refers for clarifications of new ideas and understandings of expanded old ideas. His language is the language of his experience. The symbols he will understand and respect are those of familiar concepts learned through actual seeing, sensing, and doing. His own experiential content justifies its use as a source for future learning because of its reality, its personal attributes, and its spontaneous natural

¹On leave from the College of Education. The Ohio State University.

growth. Through experience the self-expression of the child has been approved and enjoyed by his family group. Should it not be approved, enjoyed, shared, and utilized with understanding guidance for his own advancement in the area of group learning commonly called "school"?

The Role of Experience in Reading. Research has proved the value of experiences as tools which give clarity to otherwise enigmatic symbols. Olson says simply, "... the child's experiences give meaning to his language."² Harrison emphasizes the fact that "experiences for acquiring meaningful concepts must be important, real, varied"³ and that "... words on the printed or written page are only useful as they stimulate the recalling and constructing of meanings."⁴ Childs explains that

Experience is an affair of the concrete doing and under-going of actual individuals. . . . Hence the starting point for educational activities is the concrete capacities and interests of individual children.⁵

Lamoreaux and Lee add:

Experience is such a vital thing. Everything we see and hear and feel is interesting on the basis of our own experiences . . . We can understand only in terms of understanding already developed through our own experience.⁶

²Edward G. Olson, *School and Community*. (New York: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1946), p. 31.

³Lucile Harrison, *Reading Readiness*. (New York: Houghton-Mifflin Co., 1939), p. 1.

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 37.

⁵John Childs, *Education and Philosophy of Experimentalism*. (New York: The Century Co., 1931), p. 155.

⁶Lillian A. Lamoreaux and Dorris M. Lee, *Learning to Read through Experiences*. (New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, Inc., 1943), p. 22.

Dewey presents a more abstract view of the experience principle by stating:

. . . Since meanings are not themselves tangible things, they must be anchored by attachment to some physical existence. Existences that are especially set aside to fixate and convey meanings are symbols.⁷

When relationships are not clear, symbols are scornful absolutes. They yield no ground, confounding comprehension until defeated by experience. Meaning is non-existent without the roots of experience to nourish the brave new growth of relationships. Symbolized existence is a dimensional quality of life. Within the measurements of his own experience, the individual glimpses more depth and width and length, attainable only as he is meaningfully able to relate and re-relate his unique quality of symbolization. So a child, as he constantly reaches out from the known to the unknown, finds strength and security only as he can hold fast with one hand and reach with the other. As he is confronted with the problem of "bringing meaning to symbols" as well as getting meaning from symbols⁸ he reaches into his mental and sensory storehouse, and finds friendly comfort and guidance in past experiences. He brings meaning from within, and gets meaning from within and from without himself. All that is real to him becomes real through experience.

Experience Charts Defined. Modern educators are grateful for the opportunity of using the colorful reality of children's experiences. The modern teacher transfers that reality into recorded symbolization,

⁷John Dewey, *How We Think*. (New York: D. C. Heath and Company), p. 231.

⁸Nila B. Smith, *Learning to Read*. Illustrated Brief. (New York: Silver Burdett Co., 1949), p. 12.

simply termed "Experience Charts." The child's own natural phraseology or original adaptations of adult patterns give meaningful significance to the experiences which he relates. The symbolic interpretation of his own ideas is often as relatively exciting to him as the creation of a masterpiece is to the artist. The visible transference by the teacher of the child's narration into symbols becomes an actual processing of his original expression and coherence. Any change made in the initial presentation is warranted only by increased understanding and continuity of thought.

Some children will be more verbal, some will have had more varied experiences, some will be literally non-communicative, and some will resist any verbalization. Group influence, contagious enthusiasm, and understanding encouragement will consistently increase participation. One knows from psychology that learning proceeds from the whole to the parts. So in concerted effort by the group, relaxed and flexible understanding flows continuously to and from the individual

participants. Smith summarizes well the current point of view concerning the use of experience charts:

Experience charts which record children's own experiences are the best medium for helping the child to bring meaning to the symbols he encounters in his first attempts at reading. . . . In reading simple stories, . . . the child brings meanings to the symbols because he himself has experienced what the words tell.⁹

If the teacher can kindly draw the child from the home into the school by welcoming whole-heartedly the spontaneous gift of personality, the introduction to reading should be bridged with mutual reward. Translating school experiences into the well-known "vernacular" of the home, cooperating with the child indirectly using his purposes to blend with the teacher's objectives, should further establish this initial rapport of understanding. Willing accomplishment should eventually result, and all skills be reflective of natural growth from known to the learned-through-experience unknown.

⁹Nila B. Smith, *Learning to Read*. Illustrated Brief. (New York: Silver Burdett Co., 1949) p. 12.

Enjoying New Books with Children

CLARA EVANS¹

Today, as never before, there is a wealth of books for all children. There are two interesting developments in the current literature for young people. One is the bringing out of old books in a new dress, so the physical book is pleasing and satisfying to the child, and therefore, likely to hold his interest and attention. A case in point is Friskey and Evans' *Chicken Little Count to Ten*, published by the Children's Press. Here we have an old story dressed up with charming illustrations so that even the most sedate adult would laugh at the chicken falling down, struck by a drop of rain. A second characteristic of present-day juvenile books is the attention which is being given to the illustration and the make-up and format of the book itself so that the final product, born of the combined efforts of author, illustrator and publisher, is a very attractive book indeed. Good examples of this development are *White Snow, Bright Snow* by Alvin R. Tresselt, illustrated by Roger Duvoisin, published by Lothrop, Lee and Shepard. Each page is artistically designed. Or, to cite another such book, as a child hears and sees *Here Comes Daddy*, by Winifred Milius (Young Scott Publishers), he sees his own daddy coming home, for almost all fathers are pictured. All these lovely new creations are waiting to be shared with little children.

The first problem of those who teach little children is how to select from the wealth of the writings that come out each year. A large measure of the success of the

storyteller depends on her selection of stories, her power to discriminate, and her growing ability to evaluate. But there is more to a selection of stories than this. Every teacher knows that there are some stories meant for her to tell. Her richness of living, her power of appreciation, her background of cultural experience make her atune with a certain author and his story, and it meets with such success that the children love the story and ask for it again and again. Of course, the teacher must recognize the literary merit of the selection and be quick to see that the author has a sympathetic understanding of children. The teacher of child literature wants to build in her children the ability to make choices for themselves.

Story-time in any schoolroom, home, or library, can be the high point of the day. There are certain routine details that help children to achieve greater enjoyment. They should be grouped about the teacher or parent on comfortable chairs, far enough apart to be at ease, yet near enough for every child to see the illustrations in the book. The teacher should never have more than twenty-five listeners, so that her voice is heard but yet can be soft and well modulated. Each story-time should involve only one story. This should be an occasion, a special event, even a surprise now and then, the time waited-for all day. The teacher sits down with her children; all are comfortable and all enjoy this

¹ Assistant professor of Education, Teachers College, The University of Nebraska, Lincoln.

time. She is relaxed and so are the children. Care should be taken that the light is suitable. By way of introduction, the teacher shows the book—first the front cover page if it is beautifully illustrated as so many are today, e. g. *Blueberries for Sale* by Robert McClorkey, published by Viking. Lois Lenski's *Strawberry Girl* is excellent for this purpose too, for each unit of the story or page has a lovely illustration to show the little folks. Some teachers may prefer to tell the story through and then show the pictures. It is well to vary your way of doing in order to add to the children's interest. Be sure to hold the book on the level of the child's eye.

Stories for the young children should be read again and again. Children get just a little at each reading. All children want to be read to. With the school child, literary interest is at least two grade levels above his ability to read. There is some research to indicate that reading ability is improved by a story period each day.

In books for the more mature child of eight or nine attention should be called to the names of the author and the illustrator. Interesting happenings in their lives can be told these children.

As stories are read or told again and again, lines that repeat or say it again can be pointed out. Sometimes vivid descriptions can be read, as in *Farm Stories*, *Little Jack Rabbit*, and the *Big Shiny Eyes*.

Occasionally even colorful words can be repeated. They become part of the children's vocabulary.

Another very good use of stories or poetry can be made during rest time in Nursery School, Kindergarten or the Lower School. Some poems seem to be written just to relax children, as *Good Night*, by Margaret Brown, William Scott publishers.

The reward for the labor of choosing and the preparation for telling stories comes when eager little children say, "Tell it again, teacher!"

Factors That Influence Language Growth:

Home Influences

DOROTHEA MCCARTHY¹

Individual Differences in Language at School Entrance

Children who enter school at five or six years of age differ tremendously in their facility with oral language. Some are little chatter-boxes who talk most of their waking hours, use extensive vocabularies and all varieties of sentence forms, and who delight in plying adults with a seemingly unending barrage of questions. Others are quiet, silent children who speak only when spoken to, and often reply only with a nod or a shake of the head. Initiative and spontaneity in speech are simply not a part of their personalities. Still others use language fairly spontaneously, but speak it poorly, with serious misarticulations, poor voice quality or marked hesitations.

Teachers are confronted with the problem of helping all these children with their varying degrees of linguistic equipment to communicate, to grow in language and to acquire skill in reading and writing which are essential for academic progress. They must appraise each child's stage of language development, and try to help each one to progress. First the children learn to listen, for all who are not deaf have some rudimentary skills in listening. They listen to the teacher's voice, to the directions she gives slowly and distinctly until their ears become attuned to her voice and speech mannerisms, which differ from the voices to which each has become accustomed at home. They listen too, to the various voices of their classmates, which also present problems in intelligibility and communication. Some can listen for as long as five or ten minutes to a story, whereas others are flighty and distractible and can listen for only a minute or less. There are also marked differences in comprehension, for many may hear, but may not understand.

The children also actively produce oral speech as they address the teacher and other children, as they ask permission, plan their play, show a toy, or tell of the week-end trip with the family. For some children these are happy and successful experiences, but for others they result only in frustration and embarrassment. If John still speaks "baby-talk," his classmates may laugh; if Tony slips in a foreign word, which is accepted at home, he is misunderstood. The social situation of the group may make Arnold so tense that he repeats sounds and syllables and cannot continue.

The well-trained teacher knows that these are important experiences for each child, and that they may be extremely important in determining the degree of success each will have in his growth in the language arts. Faced with such a wide range of abilities in language the teacher naturally asks, what influences have been operating before these children came to school to bring about such marked differences in such a basic skill which is so essential to school success?

The home has been the arena of the child's first language lessons, and the varying degrees of language skill in the pupils are to a considerable extent the products of the kinds of experiences the children have had in their homes during their preschool years. The more the teacher

¹Professor of Psychology, Fordham University Graduate School. The previous article in this series dealt with the child's equipment for language growth. This article will attempt to summarize the various lines of evidence from research investigations which show the effect of home influences on language development, and how they may facilitate or limit the child's effective use of that equipment. Future articles will treat school and community influences.

can learn about the home environments of her students the better insights she will have into their potentialities and limitations for language growth.

Babbling in Infancy

Much recent research has dealt with the pre-linguistic sounds made by babies. (20, 31) We are just beginning to appreciate the importance of these early utterances and are learning how to analyze them. It has been found for example that the more the nursing service is increased in a hospital maternity ward the less crying the babies do. (1) It has also been shown that babies who are brought up in a normal family group situation vocalize more, and in a more advanced manner, than babies raised in an institutional environment. (5, 15, 16, 17, 28) These tendencies are already evident in the first six months of life and before the child uses any true language with meaning. Even the differences often noted in verbal intelligence test results at higher ages and in other measures of language development between children from homes of upper and lower socio-economic status begin to manifest themselves in the cradle. (5, 21)

Other studies have followed to higher ages those unfortunate children who have been separated from their families and who spend much of their babyhood in a hospital or foundling home. (13, 15, 16, 17, 28) The evidence shows that the lack of individual attention and mothering that the child raised in an institutional environment experiences results in a general severe retardation in motor, language, adaptive and social behavior and that the most serious and most permanent retardation occurs in the language area. These results come not only from American studies, but also from England and from France. (13, 28) The French study has shown that special individualized attention and providing some individual "mothering" within the institution seems to improve the rate of development, but that the language development seems least likely to re-

cover under an improved regime. All of this evidence then points up the importance of a normal family environment for the baby's linguistic progress even in early infancy.

Mother-Child Relationships and Speech Problems

Another group of studies seems to indicate that the amount of contact the child has with the mother who is his first language teacher seems to be related to the rate at which he progresses in language growth. It is to the mother's smile and to her voice that the child gives his first responses and echoing vocalizations. (30) It is the mother who interprets the culture to the child through the medium of language, and it is she who first impresses upon the child the socializing experiences of abiding by the rules of formal communication. The more opportunity the child has to hear a friendly voice and to have a correct model to imitate, the more rapid is his language growth. The only child, who has the undivided attention of the mother, and who enjoys it over a longer period of time than other children, is by far the most precocious child in learning to speak and use the language. (8) Twins however, as well as triplets, and the famed Dionne quintuplets are usually retarded in language development. (4, 8, 9) These are all children who have had to share the mother, and who have never had her completely to themselves during this all-important formative period. Girls who usually spend more time with their mothers are usually more advanced in language than boys. (21)

It appears that not only is the amount of time spent with the mother in the early years important for language development, but that the kind of relationship that exists between mother and child is also of tremendous significance in facilitating or hindering his language growth. If a child is babied and pampered, one of the significant symptoms of the immaturity of his personality may be a marked lisp, dif-

difficulty in pronouncing "r" and "l" sounds of some other form of babyish speech in which he tenaciously clings to former speech patterns and manifests his inability to grow up emotionally in this subtle fashion. (31) Some children overcome their babyish ways through the normal processes of growth and their speech clears spontaneously as they mature and have more and more outside contacts and as their mothers release them for independent life in the world. Others need the help of a speech therapist to overcome such handicaps. Their progress is reported to be about twice as fast at the kindergarten level if they have special help as if they do not, and same might not clear up at all without such help. (29) One recent study, however, compared a group of children who had speech correction work with another matched group, who not only had the same speech lessons, but whose mothers also had psychotherapy. The progress in articulation was much more marked for the children whose mothers were helped to release them emotionally and to enjoy them at successive levels of maturation. (32)

Numerous studies of stutterers reveal that their relationships with their mothers or other adults who are emotionally important to them are usually tense and disturbed. (11, 14, 18, 23, 26) Such children often harbor deep resentment and suppressed hostility toward over-possessive and domineering mothers from whom they are unable to break away emotionally even at maturity. All normal children go through a period in their speech development when they do considerable repeating of words and syllables. (7) This is due to the fact that their ideas are coming faster than they can say them. Normally this phase is outgrown in a family setting where there is a relaxed matter-of-fact attitude. However, the parents of stutterers are tense, worrisome perfectionists who are often overconcerned about speech because of a speech problem in the family background. (18, 19). They often give the child

undue attention during this period when he repeats many words. The child may then discover that he can gain attention which he does not get in other ways by this kind of speech. Or, he may sense the fear of the parents that he will stutter and, as fears are contagious, he too develops a fear which manifests itself in stuttering. Such things are especially likely to become problems if the child has to undergo an operation, suffers from a serious illness, or if a new baby arrives when he is in a critical stage of language development. Thus, it appears that the parents usually make the diagnosis in cases of stuttering, and it is they who place the label "stutterer" on a child. It is also evident that the significant events in the child's emotional life have an important influence on whether or not he will become a speech problem or whether he will come to school with normal speech habits on which to build academic success.

Home Atmosphere

Further indications of qualitative differences in the home atmosphere of children who are advanced or retarded in language development comes from a study by Milner. (25) This investigator found that children who were in the lowest third of their class in first-grade language scores did not have breakfast with their parents. No adult talked to them before school in two-way conversation. Some of them heard only orders or instructions, but there was no active participation in conversation by these children either before school, at supper or during the usual household routines when most children have opportunity for considerable give-and-take conversation and linguistic stimulation in the family circle. It was also revealed that these same children do not receive any outward show of affection from significant adults in their homes, and there seemed to be little evidence of genuine acceptance by their parents. In contrast, the children whose language scores were in the upper third of their class did have breakfast with their families and engaged

in considerable two-way conversation before school and at supper, and they were recipients of considerable outward show of affection in the family circle. When the disciplinary methods used in the homes of these two groups were studied, it appeared that those who were retarded in language were liberally treated to direct physical punishment by either or both parents; whereas those high in language scores were subjected to controlling, preventing and prohibitory disciplinary techniques, but not to corporal punishment. It is quite probable that these are some of the factors that operate more often in the lower socio-economic levels to retard language development of children in these groups and hence may account in large part for the often reported differences in language development of various socio-economic classes.

Bilingualism

Children who come from homes where a foreign language is spoken present a problem familiar to most experienced teachers. (2) All of these children have the same kinds of problems of leaving home and adjusting to the school situation that English-speaking children have, but in addition, they are confronted with having to learn an entirely new system of communication with which they have had little or no experience. Inability to communicate makes even the well-adjusted adult feel insecure when he travels in a foreign country. How much more insecure must the little child feel when he enters a classroom where a strange language is spoken, and where perhaps the whole culture which represents everything he has learned to love in the home is disregarded, laughed at, or at least suppressed! It is important that teachers and classmates show interest in and respect for the bilingual child's other system of communication which is merely different from, and not necessarily inferior to, the prevailing system in the school and in the community. In fact, it is sheer happenstance that his native tongue is not theirs, and they too, may some day need to speak and use his language; and may spend

many long hours laboriously acquiring even the degree of facility he already possesses in it. One's language habits have deep emotional roots, and in individual cases, the ease with which one overcomes a foreign accent, or the tenaciousness with which he retains it, may be an unconscious symbolic reaction to persons and events in early childhood with which such speech patterns have become associated. (6, 12)

Interdependence of Home and School Atmospheres

As the children begin to feel secure in the classroom situation they become freer and more spontaneous, and in a permissive classroom atmosphere they make marked progress in listening and speaking skills. The teacher uses simple books to tell and read stories and develops interest in books by encouraging children to turn pages and to look at pictures. In every way she tries to create a desire to read.

Such preliminary training for reading readiness may not be necessary, however, for children whose homes have provided them with good oral example, with a variety of books and who have had stories read to them at home. Children unconsciously absorb the attitudes of adults towards books. The child who comes from a home where two newspapers a day, several magazines a week and several books a month are read by the parents may see reading as a source of enjoyment and recreation for those about him. He will be curious about what can possibly hold the interest of his parents so long. As all children want to be grown-up, and do imitate adult behavior in much of their activity, the child from the highly literate home often pretends to read, wants to read, asks to be taught the meaning of symbols on paper and tries to make meaningful marks as he colors and paints. This kind of home atmosphere and example is likely to lay the foundation for academic progress, and it is children from such homes who practically teach themselves to read.

The home has created a need and a desire to acquire such skills and has made them seem important to the child.

On the other hand, children who come from homes where little reading is done, where the parents spend their leisure hours on the golf course or tennis courts, at the bridge table or at the work bench, at the bowling alley, or listening to the radio and watching television, are not likely to value reading so highly. Books and reading seem unnecessary and unimportant and do not attract or hold their interest. Children from homes where parents are illiterate may also sense their parents' feeling of distaste for reading and their frustration at their own inability to read well, and their feeling of inadequacy when confronted with a reading situation. It is for children from homes such as these that reading readiness programs are essential, and for whom the learning of the complicated skills of reading and writing need to be deferred. Children whose families communicate with excessive use of gesture language, who use elliptical expressions amounting to a kind of oral short-hand cannot anticipate how a sentence should be completed, and hence cannot help themselves much in guessing a new word from context. Such children need much preliminary practice in oral English, speaking and listening before they are ready to read.

Children differ too in the range of experiences they have had. Those who have had visits to the country have probably acquired words like "tractor," "pasture," and "acre" in their vocabularies. (10) Those whose families have broadened their experiences by taking them to visit the seashore, a zoo or a dairy, and who take the trouble to talk to them about these experiences, giving them the proper terms for new objects seen and new processes observed, will have much more extensive vocabularies on which to build their later language arts, than the children who come from bare, barren homes, who have never had a vacation, been to a farm, or had a ride on a train, and whose

chief recreation has been playing with sticks, stones and tin cans on hard city sidewalks.

Then too, some homes have provided the child with many playmates near his own age ever since he was able to toddle about in the yard. Perhaps he has had the stimulation of play with older brothers and sisters or older neighborhood children, or perhaps he has had only one or two younger playmates available. Perhaps his sole child companion lives at some distance, has often been ill and they have played together only rarely, on carefully planned occasions. Such a child has to make tremendous social adjustments when he comes to school, and may find companionship much more interesting than books for some time. His needs on coming to school are very different from those of the child who has had two or three years of nursery school experience and who has already learned a variety of techniques of getting along with other children.

These are some of the ways in which home background from infancy on make children different as they approach the language arts curriculum in the elementary school. It is obvious that these factors produce such different kinds of children with such a variety of needs in language, with their varying patterns of skills and handicaps, that individualization of instruction is the only answer to the problem of their adequate education.

Language Disabilities

Even with optimum conditions in the school however, there are some children who fail to learn to read and who develop serious learning disabilities even in spite of normal mentality. (22, 23, 33) These often occur on a basis of emotional blocking and seem to be due to severe insecurity, anxiety or emotional trauma experienced about the same time the child was expected to learn certain language skills. Anxiety and emotional tension are opposed to learning. For effective learning to occur a child needs to be relaxed, secure and

free from anxiety. Studies of children who have failed to learn to read in spite of normal mentality, normal vision, and presumably adequate methods of instruction show them to be seriously maladjusted emotionally. (22, 23, 27) Children most susceptible to emotional blocking in regard to these early learnings seem to be those who have recently experienced a change of home, the arrival of a younger brother or sister and those whose parents are either excessively overprotecting or openly hostile and rejecting. Such children may be so preoccupied with their anxieties or with their unresolved jealousies that they cannot concentrate on the minute differences they are required to distinguish in order to learn to read. Usually their failure to learn to read is only one part of a total language disorder syndrome, (33) for they are likely to have been slow in learning to talk to have had poor articulation, and may have even stuttered for a time. (22) For language difficulties do not seem to occur singly and are much more likely to be found in combination in the same individuals than would be expected by chance. Sometimes the family tensions affect several children in the family similarly so that more than one form of language disability may occur in the same family. The syndromes of siblings may be similar or one child may stutter and another may have difficulty with reading.

Children having language learning disabilities do not all have the same type of personality. (23) Those whose parents are overprotecting are likely to stutter especially if they are in the upper intellectual levels. If their intelligence is average or a little below, reading is likely to be their stumbling-block and they usually have a shy submissive, immature personality pattern. On the other hand if the anxieties seem to be associated with parental rejection, hostility and neglect the child's personality is likely to be that of the aggressive bully or the predelinquent whose low school marks are often attributed to his misbehavior.

Such forms of retardation are often allowed to become cumulative and are not called to the attention of a clinic or a remedial teacher until after several years of failure have built up unfortunate attitudes towards school, books and reading, which act as secondary causes and which are sometimes given primary consideration in treatment. Often complaints are sent home and these already rejecting or oversolicitous parents are asked to help the children with their reading. This technique usually only makes matters worse. The rejecting and hostile parent only becomes more so, for he is now ashamed of his son and takes it out on him in punitive and restrictive disciplinary measures, which only increase the child's basic anxieties and his feelings of inadequacy and worthlessness. The overprotective parent on the other hand, may sit down with the child and give him excessive attention for school work. This, the child may enjoy, and he may find such attention more pleasurable than school success. With his regressive patterns of behavior he may even dread the loss of the time the parent gives him and he may find it more emotionally satisfying to remain academically dependent on the parent.

Not all research studies are in harmony on this interpretation of language disabilities. Some writers seem confused because children having reading and speech disabilities do not present the same personality syndrome. Certain of the large-scale studies have used superficial group techniques which have been inadequate to reveal the dynamics involved in individual cases.

It should not be construed from the position expressed here, however, that emotional insecurity always manifests itself in a language disorder. Indeed, the clinical literature is replete with evidence that insecurity often shows itself in a variety of other problems. It is even possible for a bright, emotionally insecure child to read exceptionally well and to use his reading as a means of securing adult attention or

to escape into a fantasy world. However, when reading and speech cases are studied deeply enough to reveal the underlying dynamics, the point of view expressed above is invariably confirmed. It is also evident that in any group of children who are manifesting severe behavior disorders the number of severe reading and speech problems is much higher than would be found in a sample of normal school children.

Remedial Work

The teacher who remains cold and impersonal and relies chiefly on her choice of materials and her special techniques is rarely successful. Her successes are likely to be limited to those cases whose anxieties and fears which interfered with their original learning have cleared up in the meantime due to the child's own growth and maturation, or due to improved attitudes in the home situation. On the other hand, there is considerable evidence in the literature to indicate that the teacher is most successful in remedial work who is herself a well adjusted, warm, outgoing personality, who shows genuine interest in the child and enables him to find some degree of security in the tutoring situation which he has never found before. Redmount (27) has found for example that there is a definite relationship between the adequacy of the tutor's personality adjustment and the degree of improvement in the child.

The overprotective parents with shy submissive children having language difficulties are more likely to seek help with the problem and to be cooperative with a school or clinical remedial program. These are the types of cases which seem to respond best to treatment. However, they often need a fairly long period of therapy before they are ready to undertake real work in reading or speech. When personality changes are brought about and the child is relieved of his anxieties and tensions, much progress in speech and reading seems to occur rather spontaneously. It is almost as if certain latent learnings to which the child has been

exposed during his period of anxiety now emerge and become functionally effective.

The rejecting parents of aggressive children are, however, unlikely to seek help from a clinic or remedial program and are unlikely to cooperate with the program if they are induced to make an initial contact. Such children are usually referred by the school, by a social agency or by the court and are rarely seen in clinics charging high fees, for no one is sufficiently interested in their welfare to pay for their tutoring. Usually they do not get help until a considerably later age and after a more prolonged period of failure. It is much more difficult to accomplish real results with cases of this type, for often they have been hurt too deeply and too early for their personalities to respond favorably. It is extremely difficult if not impossible to find an adequate substitute for parental affection which should be every child's birth-right. Perhaps by earlier identification and with improved techniques based on a real appreciation of the emotional basis of their problems we will be able to help more of them than we have in the past. Some of them are motivated to learn in adolescence as they begin to feel their growing independence, but this usually happens only when they have found a parent substitute in a teacher, relative, pastor, recreation leader or supervisor in a correctional school who has had a wholesome influence and enabled them to find some measure of security in this troubled world.

From the foregoing it becomes abundantly clear that the mother is the first language teacher and that the quality of the parent child relationships does much to lay the groundwork for success in the language arts. It is also clear that anything that can be done to ease the transition from home to school, to make the child feel secure in the school situation, to help rejecting parents to be more accepting of their children, and to help oversolicitous parents to release their children for independent growth will free children from their emotional tensions

and anxieties so that they may take advantage of the best opportunities for learning in the modern language arts program.

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(Continued on Page 440)

Look and Listen

Edited by RAOUL R. HAAS¹

One of the problems which has been of real concern to teachers has been touched on recently in two publications. The competition of radio and television for the reading time of children is frequently named as one factor in lessened school achievement. The articles—one an editorial, the other a newspaper story—would seem to illustrate again the fallacy of assuming an either/or position with respect to reading and these two mass media.

We are living in a world in which technological progress has added to our means for transmitting the cultural heritage. Books, traditionally, have been the avenue through which schools have attempted to achieve this objective. It is not suggested that audio-visual instructional materials take the place of books—although Reed would seem to imply that this may be necessary in the case of the retarded reader. Gould, on the other hand, points out that some of our fears with respect to the decline and fall of the art of reading due to radio and TV have been groundless.

The position of "Look and Listen" is that reading may be made more meaningful through the wise employment of audio-visual instructional materials. It is assumed, further, that audio-visual media also gain through the background which reading alone can give. Each has its place in the development of concepts and ideas; each buttresses the other.

Finally, this month brings news of pertinent films, filmstrips, and a television program which would appear to have value in developing effective readers.

Reading and A-V

Reading, Paul C. Reed² points out, is for

¹Mr. Haas is Director, the North Side Branch, Chicago Teachers College.

²Mr. Reed is editor of *Educational Screen*. His editorial appeared in the February, 1952, issue of this publication.

readers. "Children who read well can probably learn more from reading than those who do not read so well.

"We looked over the test results recently for a group of 1551 unselected seventh-grade pupils who took a standardized reading comprehension test. They took this test at the fourth month of the seventh grade and the median was at the expected 7.4 grade level. Looking at the facts in another way, we can say that 75% of the group were reading at the 6.3 level or above; 25% were reading below the 6.3 level.

"Now, let's suppose that for all these seventh-graders the dominant teaching method is textbook reading. Seventh-grade textbooks for science, social studies, and other subjects are normally pitched to about a seventh-grade reading level. If such books were used, then you could expect that approximately 75% of the total group would be learning something about the subject matter."

Mr. Reed then asks: "What about the other 25%?" Are they to be expected to learn through these same books? If so, a hopelessly unsuitable method of instruction is being employed. "For those children whose reading comprehension is considerably below their grade level, some method of learning other than textbook reading is an absolute must. That method, of course, is the audio-visual method.

"Lest we be misunderstood," Mr. Reed concludes, "we want to emphasize that reading is obviously a wonderful teaching tool for those who read with ease and comprehension; for those who do not . . . reading is obviously not an adequate teaching tool. We are *not* saying, furthermore, that audio-visual methods are only for those who read poorly. We believe in the superior effectiveness of audio-visual methods for good and poor readers alike. But the poorer

the reader, the greater the need for audio-visual methods."

● In a survey of the effects of television on American life, Jack Gould³, Radio and Television Editor of the *New York Times*, throws some light on the problem of reading and its relation to audio-visual media. "The reading of books, in general, has withstood the onslaught of television and the printed word at present is not seriously endangered by the visual medium's invasion of the home."

Although the sale of books to adults apparently has fallen off in many cities, public libraries in the main reported an upward trend in circulation. "A major surprise in the reports on the nation's reading habits," according to the survey, "is a refutation of the persistent assumption that the young book reader would be lost to television. A substantial majority of public libraries reported that children actually were reading more and not less."

"Some librarians said that television appeared to be stimulating the youngster's interest in books, especially Western and adventure stories of the type generously represented on video schedules. . . . One consistent trend that apparently affects all types of reading matter is how closely its contents resemble the program material available on video. Among books, fiction, especially romances and mystery stories, has fallen off more than non-fiction. . . . Sales of children's books has gone up rather than down in the last few years."

● A new sound motion picture which will encourage community use of the library is Encyclopaedia Britannica's *Library Story* (1 reel, 16mm., color). This film shows the functioning of a modern library in focussing city activities. Discussion groups meet in its rooms, art is exhibited, people find hobbies, the blind find Braille, students find information.

³"What TV Is Doing to Us." A survey of the effects of television on American life. Seven articles reprinted from the *New York Times*, June-July, 1951.

The library, used to some extent by everyone, exercises a tremendous influence on people as individuals and as members of the community. This picture was filmed in the new Wilmette, Illinois, Public Library—a modern building of highly functional design.

● The Keystone View Company, Meadville, Pennsylvania, announces the release of a new series of 100 lantern slides on Reading Readiness. These slides are designed for use with the overhead projector and, usually, through the use of masks, a number of exposures are afforded by each slide. The series was done by Evelyn Brunskill and illustrated by Dorothy Bechtel, both of Dubuque, Iowa.

Divided into seven major sections, the titles in the series are:

1. Visual Discrimination.
2. Kinesthetic and Left-to-Right Progression.
3. Concept Building and Classification.
4. Language Development.
5. Vocabulary and Concept-of-Reading.
6. Auditory Perception.
7. Combined Visual-and Auditory-Discrimination.

The material will be highly valued by teachers who know the advantages of postponing actual reading from books until ample preparation has been made through reading-readiness materials and by those who know the advantages, from a visual-maturity point of view, of doing as much as possible of this work on the screen or on the blackboard. The opportunities for group work and for interesting motivation in projecting these highly colored pictures on the screen or blackboard are almost limitless.

● Two primary grade films intended to provide background for reading and oral language are available through Coronet Films, 65 East Water Street, Chicago 1.

1. *Mittens: Story of A Kitten*, (1 reel, sound, color (\$100) or b&w (\$50); Educational Collaborator: Paul R. Wendt, Associate Professor of Education, San Francisco State Col-

lege). Creative expression is encouraged in this delightful story about a little girl and her kitten. Words such as *nursing*, *drink*, *play*, *whiskers* and *climb* are matched to scenes defining their meaning and the audience is aided in verbalizing their experiences with kittens and other animals.

2. *Peppy: The Puppy*, (1 reel, sound, color (\$100) or b&w (\$50); Educational Collaborator: Paul R. Wendt). To encourage young children to read, write, draw and tell about interesting experiences with puppies and pets is one of the purposes of this film. Vocabulary development is aided through visual meaning, the spoken word and printed word being used simultaneously and repeated at systematic intervals. Methods of care and responsibility for a pet are also stressed.

● Among the more than ninety-five new filmstrips being released by Young America Films, Inc., 18 East 41st Street, New York 17, this fall and winter are:

1. *Golden Book Set No. 5*, (8 color filmstrips, \$23.75). A continuation of the adaptations of the popular "Little Golden Book" stories prepared for reading classes in the primary grades.

2. *Folk Tales from Many Lands*, (6 color filmstrips, \$30). A group of well-known folk tales of other countries, especially selected for their use in middle and upper elementary

school reading classes, staged and re-enacted with puppets.

● *Omnibus*, created by the TV-Radio Workshop of The Ford Foundation, will be presented over the CBS Television Network starting Sunday, November 9, at 4:30 to 6:00 P. M. EST. The series is planned to continue for 26 weeks.

The series will be written, directed and performed by the finest talent available both here and abroad. Included on the series' varied schedule will be original plays by Maxwell Anderson; French ballet features in production in Paris; a music series by Leopold Stokowski; a series of plays by poet-critic James Agee; and especially edited films by the New York Zoological Society and the American Museum of Natural History.

Alistair Cooke, winner of this year's Peabody Radio Award for his broadcasts on the American scene, will be the master of ceremonies for *Omnibus*. Mr. Cooke is chief correspondent in the United States for the *Manchester Guardian* and author of the recently published collection of essays, *One Man's America*.

"A variety of features is now being produced ranging from comedy through fact and fiction to modern living and treated to popularize matters of vital interest and lasting value," according to Robert Saudek, Director of The Ford Foundation's TV-Radio Workshop.

The Educational Scene

Edited by WILLIAM A. JENKINS¹

FORTY-SECOND ANNUAL MEETING OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

HOTEL STATLER, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

NOVEMBER 27-29, 1952

CONVENTION THEME: *GREAT TRADITIONS, WIDENING HORIZONS*

- celebrating the 51st year of our host, the New England Association of Teachers of English
- welcoming *The English Language Arts*, comprehensive first volume from the NCTE Curriculum Commission, co-ordinating elementary school, high school and college planning
- appraising our work again, and informing ourselves, our fellow teachers, our administrators, our communities

PROGRAM

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 25

MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, 9:30 A.M.-10:00 P.M.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 26

**MEETING OF THE COMMISSION ON THE ENGLISH CURRICULUM
9:00 A.M.-5:00 P.M.**

MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, 7:30 P.M.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 27

CONTINUOUS EXHIBIT OF MATERIALS AND AIDS FOR TEACHING

**MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS, 9:30 A.M.-3:00 P.M.
(All members of the Council are invited to attend as auditors)**

ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING, 3:15-4:15 P.M.

(All members of the Council participate in this meeting)

RECEPTION FOR MEMBERS, 4:45-5:30 P.M.

GENERAL SESSION, 8:00-10:00 P.M.

Presiding, Helen K. Mackintosh, U. S. Office of Education; Second Vice-President of the Council

Invocation—The Reverend Herbert Gezork, Andover Newton Theological School, Newton, Massachusetts

Welcome—D. Leo Daley, Assistant Superintendent in charge of Secondary Schools, Boston, Massachusetts

¹John Deere Junior High School, Moline, Illinois.

President's Address: "Perspectives in 1952"—Lennox Grey, Teachers College, Columbia University

The English Language Arts: A Link between Yesterday and Tomorrow—Dora V. Smith, University of Minnesota; Director, Commission on the English Curriculum

Education for Values—Harold C. Case, President, Boston University

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 28

Fri.

A. M.

GENERAL SESSION, 9:15-11:00 A. M.

"Making Our Purposes Clear"

Presiding, Lennox Grey, Teachers College, Columbia University; President of the Council Clear for Action—Robert C. Pooley, University of Wisconsin

The Underprivileged in Language Arts—Arno Jewett, Specialist for Language Arts, U. S. Office of Education

"Platform for 1953"—Harlen M. Adams, Chico State College

LUNCHEON SESSIONS, 12:00

1. *Books for Children: A Luncheon for Librarians and Teachers in Elementary and Secondary Schools*

Presiding, Marion C. Sheridan, Hillhouse High School, New Haven, Connecticut; President, New England Association of Teachers of English

Speaker, Elizabeth Yates, author of *Amos Fortune*, Newbery Award, 1951

FRIDAY AFTERNOON CONFERENCES

Theme: GREAT TRADITIONS AND WIDENING HORIZONS

LARGE-GROUP CONFERENCES, 2:15-3:30

1. *The Changing Curriculum—Traditions and New Directions*
Presiding, Dora V. Smith, University of Minnesota

Significant Developments in the Elementary School—Marian Zollinger, Portland, Oregon, Public Schools

Meeting the Changing Needs of High School Students—Dorothy G. Potter, Bulkley High School, Hartford, Connecticut

Design for College English—Porter G. Perrin, University of Washington

Recorder: Ruth G. Strickland, Indiana University

Those attending this conference should attend Discussion

Group 1, 2, or 3, where this topic will be pursued

2. *Problems Old and New—Never Media, New Approaches, Never Solutions*
Presiding, W. Wilbur Hatfield, Secretary-Treasurer of the Council

How Can We Make the Newer Resources Available?—Lou La Brant, New York University

Those attending this conference should attend Discussion

Group 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, or 16, where this topic will be pursued

DISCUSSION GROUPS, 3:45-5:00

- A. Where Do We Stand on Curriculum:
Discussions Growing out of Conference I

1. *ELEMENTARY*

Discussion Leader, Helen J. Hanlon, Public Schools, Detroit, Michigan

Resource People:

S. Elizabeth Campbell, Rhode Island State College, Providence
Luverne Crabtree Walker, Public Schools, Washington, D. C.
John J. DeBoer, University of Illinois
Ann V. Foberg, Connecticut State Department of Education, Hartford
Elizabeth Guilfoile, Public Schools, Cincinnati, Ohio
George Hudock, Public Schools, Detroit, Michigan
Wanda Robertson, University of Utah
Helen Blair Sullivan, Boston University

Recorder:

Bernice Freemand, LaGrange, Georgia

5. *Can They All Learn To Read With Understanding?*

Discussion Leader, Helen J. Crossen, University of Cincinnati

Resource People:

Foster B. Gresham, Lane High School, Charlottesville, Virginia
Olive S. Niles, Boston University
Edith M. Rideout, Newtonville, Massachusetts, Public Schools
Evelyn R. Robinson, Massachusetts State Department of Education
Elmer R. Smith, Providence, Public Schools
Lester VanderWerf, University of New Hampshire
Jean A. Wilson, Alameda, California, High School
Mabel Wright, Wilmington, Delaware, Public Schools

Recorder:

Marguerite Blough, East High School, Waterloo, Iowa

6. *How Can Pre-Service and In-Service Education of Teachers
of English Be Improved?*

Discussion Leader, Lisette J. McHarry, University of Illinois

Resource People:

Thomas F. Dunn, Drake University
Marian Edman, Wayne University
Dorothy Everett, Manchester, New Hampshire, High School
Paul Farmer, Henry W. Grady High School, Atlanta, Georgia
Dorothy Smith Foster, Lincoln High School, Tacoma, Washington
Hoyt C. Franchere, Vanport College
W. Leslie Garnett, Kent State University
W. H. Hubert, Benedict College
Tom D. Vogt, Yale University

Recorder:

Earl A. Moore, Western Kentucky State Teachers College

10. On "Humanities"?

Discussion Leader, Alfred H. Grommon, Stanford University

Discussants:

(Five-minute talks to develop points of view)

June Ferebee, Bronxville, New York, Public Schools

Mrs. Charlotte Whitaker Cummings, Evanston, Illinois, Township High School

Francis Shoemaker, University of Wisconsin

Louise Dudley, Stephens College

Resource People:

Dorothy Cooke, New York State Department of Education

Eivion Owen, Department of Education, Quebec, Canada

Wilmer K. Trauger, State Teachers College, Potsdam, New York

Recorder:

Owen D. Harry, Rutgers University

11. On The "New Linguistics"?

Discussion Leader, Elliott Dobbie, Columbia University

Discussants:

(Five-minute talks to develop points of view)

Alvina Treut Burrows, New York University

Harry R. Warfel, University of Florida

Resource People:

Luella B. Cook, Minneapolis Public Schools

C. C. Fries, University of Michigan

Recorder:

Aileen Kitchin, Teachers College, Columbia University

12. On "Communication"?

Discussion Leader, John Gerber, University of Iowa

Discussants:

(Five-minute talks to express points of view)

LaVerne Strong, Connecticut State Department of Education

Rhoda Watkins, McKinley High School, Washington, D. C.

Harold B. Allen, University of Minnesota

Resource Persons:

Elizabeth J. Drake, Binghamton, New York, Public Schools

Albert Marckwardt, University of Michigan

13. On Audio-Visual Advances?

Discussion Leader, F. Devlin, Somerville, Massachusetts Public Schools

Discussants:

(Five-minute talks to develop points of view)

Martha A. Gable, Philadelphia Public Schools

Richard G. Decker, Schenectady, Public Schools

Peter Donchian, Wayne University

Resource People:

Mrs. Helen Rachford, Los Angeles County Schools

H. A. Billingsley, Wyandotte High School, Kansas City, Missouri

Harold A. Anderson, University of Chicago

14. *On Improving World Understanding Through Communication?*
(In co-operation with the National Council for the Social Studies)

Discussion Leader, Joseph Mersand, Long Island City High School, New York City

Discussants:

(Five-minute talks to develop points of view)

Mrs. Katherine Gardiner, Wilson Teachers College, Washington, D. C.

Ron Edgerton, Brookline, Massachusetts, High School

Robert Lado, University of Michigan

Resource People:

Karlene V. Russell, Vermont State Department of Education

Norman Young, Colebrook Academy, Colebrook, New Hampshire

Norman C. Stageberg, Iowa State Teachers College, Cedar Falls, and Air University, Maxwell, Alabama, Air Force Base

Recorder, Robert Garris, Wellesley College

15. *On Co-Operative Efforts of Speech and English Teachers?*
(In co-operation with the New England Speech Association)

Discussion Leader, Wilbert Pronovost, Boston University

Discussants:

Language Arts—Elementary Schools, Althea Beery, Cincinnati Public Schools

Speech—Elementary Schools, Mrs. Zelda Horner Kosh, Arlington, Virginia, Public Schools

English—Secondary Schools, Anna McWeeney, Nashua, New Hampshire, High School

Speech—Secondary Schools

English—Colleges, Herbert Fowler, State Teachers College of Connecticut

Speech—Colleges

ANNUAL DINNER, 7:00 P. M.

(Ballroom)

Fri.

P. M.

Toastmaster, Strang Lawson, Colgate University

Invocation, The Very Reverend Monseignor Cornelius T. M. Sherlock, Brighton, Massachusetts

Greetings to the New England Association of Teachers of English on Entering Its Second Half Century—Francis Keppel, Harvard University—Claude M. Fuess, Phillips Andover Academy

Response for the New England Association—Marion C. Sheridan, President: "Here We Are"

Traditions and Horizons in the Teaching of Poetry—Archibald MacLeish, Boylston Professor Emeritus of English, Harvard University; author of *Conquistador*, *The Fall of the City*, *America Was Promises*

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 29

BREAKFAST FOR PUBLIC RELATIONS REPRESENTATIVES, 8:00 A.M.

(Bay State Room)

SECTION MEETING, 9:30-11:30 A.M.

1. College Section

(Georgian Room)

Elementary Section

(Parlors A, B, C)

Presiding, Mildred A. Dawson, Appalachian State Teachers College, Boone, N. C.,
Chairman of the Elementary Section

Topic: Children in Today's World: The Challenge to Teachers of Language Arts
General Program

Helping Children to be Effective Listeners, Speakers, Readers, and Writers—
the Skills—Ernest Hilton, Fredonia, New York

Developing Responsiveness, Creativeness, Judgment, and Stability in Today's
Children—May Hill Arbuthnot

Section 1—Encouraging and Developing Creativeness

Chairman: Augusta Nichols, Manchester, New Hampshire

Resource Person: Florence Morrissey, Fredonia, New York

Panel:

Ruth E. Swanbeck, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Dorothy Stewart, Newton, Massachusetts

Katherine Koch, Mishawaka, Indiana

Frank Perry, Greenwich, Connecticut

Evelyn Girardin, Baltimore, Maryland

Section 2—Building Language Arts Skills

Chairman: William H. Burton, Cambridge, Massachusetts

Resource Person: Mary T. Hayes, Orono Maine

Panel:

Elizabeth Sylvester, Saco, Maine

Ruth E. Hofer, Fredonia, New York

Frieda H. Dingee, Kingston, New York

Grace Rawlings, Baltimore, Maryland

Katherine Burke, Lynn, Massachusetts

Section 3—Promoting Moral and Spiritual Values

Chairman: Hannah M. Lindahl, Mishawaka, Indiana

Resource Person: Leland Jacobs, Columbus, Ohio

Panel:

Fannie J. Ragland, Cincinnati, Ohio

John Treanor, Boston, Massachusetts

Marguerite Sullivan, Boston, Massachusetts

Marie Bryan, College Park, Maryland

Miriam Wilt, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

ANNUAL LUNCHEON, 12:15 P.M.

(Ballroom)

Presiding, Lennox Grey, Teachers College, Columbia University; President of the Council
From the Grass Roots—John Thomas Gould, Author of *New England Town Meeting*,
Farmers Takes a Wife; Editor, *Lisbon Enterprise*, Lisbon Falls, Maine

Farm Boy to Author—Jesse Stuart, Author of *The Thread That Runs So True*, *The Man
with a Bull-Tongued Plow*.

"From New York to California the public schools are in the tightest fix in history," says well-known magazine writer and reporter John Bainbridge in the September issue of *McCall's* magazine. He adds, "the present and impending shortages of classrooms and teachers will, unless vigorously dealt with, result in a major national catastrophe."

From a survey of the state of public education across the country for *McCall's*, Mr. Bainbridge finds the schools facing these problems:

1. The school is being attacked by a small group bent on destroying public education.
2. Sweeping, general condemnations against the school in these times often find an easy acceptance.
3. Educational gains made in the last half-century are being lost.
4. The work of the spoilers appears to be increasing.

Bainbridge points out that the perilous predicament of the public schools cannot be traced to any one cause, but from incidents in Scarsdale, N. Y., Los Angeles, Calif., Ferndale, Mich., Houston, Texas, and Sapulpa, Okla. these symptoms can be pointed to:

1. Charges of Communist infiltration into the teaching profession.
2. Teaching about the United Nations viewed as nationalistically unsound.
3. Complaints over the school's program: testing, sex education, discipline, etc.
4. A blanket charge of "creeping socialism."
5. A feeling that certain textbooks do not put sufficient stress on Americanism.



Are children's books mediocre? A large number of publication-wise teachers, reviewers, and this column, would answer a positive "No" to the question, for we feel that children's books in many respects are ahead of adult reading. We can point to attractiveness in binding, illustra-

tions, and more accurate, readable text to mention only a few of our claims.

Clifton Fadiman, writing in a recent issue of *Holiday* magazine, feels that children's books are mediocre. He says, in part: "The overall impression is of high-level, conscientious, blameless, golden mediocrity. The moralistic literature of the last century tried to produce small paragons of virtue. How about our own urge to manufacture small paragons of social consciousness?" Mr. Fadiman also seems to feel that children's books are apt to give more information than their readers can digest.

This column, and this magazine, often point to children's books we believe to be of considerable merit. Seldom do we find books overstocked with facts or off-base in their attempts to arouse a social awareness at an early age. We definitely do not favor books that are just "reading for reading's sake"—if such a state is attainable. We wonder if our readers agree with us?



With the appearance of the motion picture *Ivanhoe* imminent in many theaters throughout the country, teachers are again turning to this once-favored classic as good classroom reading fare. Since its popularity will probably be temporary and hardback or cloth-bound books might not be a profitable investment, many teachers are wondering where they can find paper-back editions. The Teen Age Book Club has the answer. *Ivanhoe* was offered as a selection in October in a paper-bound edition.

Our opinion is that *Ivanhoe* is one of the world's finest adventure stories, and after seeing the movie, ninth and tenth, and possibly eighth graders, will find the book exciting reading.

Information and a sample book may be obtained from the Teen Age Book Club by writing to 351 Fourth Avenue, New York 10. Books are priced at 25 or 35 cents, depending on size.



Most teachers realize that the average child knows comic book characters better than they know our secretary of state or England's prime minister. But many of them do not know these startling facts: That the average child in some communities spends two or more hours each day listening to the radio. That five and six-year olds are among the heaviest viewers—they often watch TV four or five hours a day. That many children, ages 7 to 17, spend an average of three hours a day in front of television sets; others watch video 22 hours a week—almost as much time as they spend on their lessons. That over 90 per cent of children between 8 and 13 years of age regularly read comic strips and comic books. That every Saturday, and often three or four times a week, 10 million children's eyes are glued to movie screens.

These and other equally startling facts are brought to light in a booklet we mentioned by title last month: *Your Child and Radio, TV, Comics, and Movies*, by Professor Paul Witty and Dr. Harry Bricker, published by Science Research Associates.

Witty and Bricker point out that while these media have become more and more important to our children in recent years and seem to crowd everything else out of their leisure time, teachers and parents are becoming more concerned about them. They realize that practically every child is involved. The authors offer them measures which may lessen the bad effects of the media.

The media, Witty and Bricker find, are not harmful in themselves. Rather it is the way they are often used and the things they bring to the eyes and the ears of children that cause the trouble. The horror and violence that run through so much of the material; the repetition of trite situations that may stunt the creativeness of children exposed to them; the dubious values and standards stressed as entertainment; and, the unbalanced diet of fun and recreation are among the chief fears of the parents.

As antidotes to the communication poisons the authors offer these approaches:

1. Moderation is essential. Only the parent and the child can decide how much time he should have for listening to radio, watching TV, or reading the comics. Rations and bans are in order.

2. Homework should come before or after his favorite programs. All children can't mix them.

3. Reviews or authoritative opinion should govern choice of movies. It's a good idea, the authors say, for movie going *not* to become a habit.



Of the 570 books, pamphlets, monographs, and reports in education published in 1951, 54, or about 9.6 percent were judged to be outstanding by a group of about 200 educators. The selection was made under the direction of the Education Department at the Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore.

The list of these "Outstanding Educational Books of 1951," giving all information necessary for purchasing, and containing brief descriptions of the books, is available from the Publications Department of the Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore, Maryland. The lists are five cents each.



A new edition of *Free and Inexpensive Learning Materials*, published by the Division of Surveys and Field Services of George Peabody College for Teachers, Nashville, Tenn., has just appeared. The list sells for \$1.00 per copy.



A well-known booklist classifying young people's books according to ethical themes, *Character Formation Through Books*, compiled by Clara J. Kircher, has just appeared in a revised and enlarged edition. It is available for

\$1.50 from the Catholic University of American Press, Washington 17, D. C.



The School of Education and the Reading Clinic of the University of Delaware will sponsor the third annual one-day Parents Conference on Reading on Saturday, November 8, 1952.

"Books for Children" is the theme of this year's conference.

May Hill Arbuthnot, author of "Books for Children," "Time for Fairy Tales," and "Time for Poetry," is the principal speaker. In the morning her topic will be "Significant Values in Children's Books," and in the afternoon session she will talk about "Enjoying Poetry."



Here are the Junior Literary Guild selec-

tions for the month of November, 1952:

For boys and girls 5 and 6 years of age: *All Ready for Winter*, by Leone Adelson. David McKay Co., \$2.00.

For boys and girls 7 and 8 years of age: *The Vanilla Village*, by Priscilla Garden. Pellegrini and Cudahy, \$2.00.

For boys and girls 9, 10, and 11 years of age: *The Secret of Donkey Island*, by Lavinia Davis. Doubleday & Co., \$2.50.

For older girls, 12 to 16 years of age: *Who Was Sylvia?*, by Nancy Hartwell. Henry Holt and Co., \$2.50.

For old boys, 12 to 16 years of age: *Wild Dogs of Drowning Creek*, by Manly Wade Wellman. Holiday House, \$2.50.



FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE LANGUAGE GROWTH:

(Continued from Page 428)

25. Milner, E., "A Study of the Relationships between Reading Readiness in Grade One School Children and Patterns of Parent-Child Interaction," *Child Development*, XXII (1951), 95-112.
26. Moncur, J. P., "Environmental Factors Differentiating Stuttering Children from Non-Stuttering Children," *Speech Monographs* XVIII, (1951), 312-325.
27. Redmount, R. S., "Description and Evaluation of a Corrective Program for Reading Disability," *Journal of Educational Psychology*, XXXIX (1948), 347-358.
28. Roudinesco, J. and G. Appell, "Les Repercussions de la Stabulation Hospitalière sur le Développement Psychomoteur des Jeunes Enfants," *Sem. Hop. Paris*, XXVI (1950), 2271-2273.
29. Sommer, Agnes T., "The Effect of Group Training upon the Correction of Articulatory Defects in Preschool Children," *Child Development*, III (1932), 91-107.
30. Stengel, E., "A Clinical and Psychological Study of Echo-Reactions," *Journal of Mental Science*, XCIII (1947), 598-612.
31. Thompson, George G., *Child Psychology*, Chap. 9. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1952.
32. Wood, K. S., "Parental Maladjustment and Functional Articulatory Defects in Children," *Journal of Speech Disorders*, XI (1946), 255-275.
33. Yedinack, Jeannette G., "A Study of Linguistic Functioning of Children with Articulation and Reading Disabilities," *Journal of Genetic Psychology*, LXXIV (1949), 23-59.

Review and Criticism

For the Teacher

How to Test Readability. By Rudolf Flesch.
Harper & Brothers, \$1.00.

The readability formula in this book, like the other reading formulas we have—Lewerenz, Lorge, Dale-Chall, Washburne-Morphett, and Yoakam—grew out of the idea of grading textbooks for children. Undoubtedly the search for a quantitative basis in the selection of school books is a worth-while undertaking. If you force children to study material that is beyond their readiness capacity, they not only will fall behind in their education but also will have an unhappy experience in the bargain. So proper grading of texts may mean the difference between real learning and mere exposure to something "onpleasant," to use a famous definition of education.

The Flesch formula takes cognizance of the number of words in the sentences found in the sample passages, the number of personal references (*we, they*, etc.) in the passages, and the number of affixes and suffixes (syllabification) to the words. These various aspects of sentence structure are measured in each of the one-hundred-word samples and are translated into a reading-difficulty score by means of the formula. The reading-difficulty score is converted, in turn, into a grade-level value of reading difficulty.

Concerning quantitative aspects, it may be said that the Flesch readability test is best used to measure adult materials, especially magazines; however, that hypothesis needs further proof. In summarizing qualitative considerations, Russell and Fea make certain points.¹ The Flesch formula, like the others, does *not*: (1) attempt to measure conceptual difficulty

¹David H. Russell and Henry R. Fea, "Validity of Six Readability Formulas as Measures of Juvenile Fiction," *Elementary School Journal*, LII (November, 1951), 142.

in the textual material; (2) give consideration to the organization and the arrangement of material; (3) make allowance for the fact that an unusual word, replacing a commonplace word, may make a sentence or an idea clearer; (4) vary ratings according to different interests which persons may possess at different developmental levels; (5) take account of physical factors such as format and illustrations.

In these days when increased emphasis is being given to measurement of the readability of communication in many fields, educators and all those engaged in work which involves communication should be familiar with *How to Test Readability*.
Edna Lue Furness

For Early Adolescents

Mephisto Waltz. By Ann M. Lingg. Henry Holt and Co., \$3.50.

A most comprehensive biography of Franz Liszt written on an adult level. His childhood, family relationships, love life, contacts with other musicians and the effect of each of these on his musical career leave the reader with a positive impression of his tempestuous life, but overwhelmed with detail. A more selective attitude toward her material by the author would probably have resulted in a more readable biography. An index and list of recordings of Liszt compositions are valuable for study. Would not recommend the book for children below senior high school level and then only in very specialized collections.

Doris H. Moulton

The Birdman, The Story of Leonardo Da Vinci.

By Mitchell Foster. Illustrated by the author. Stravon Publishers, \$1.00.

Leonardo Da Vinci doubtless would be surprised to find the story of his life captioned "The Birdman." More truly he was "The Man Who Saw Angels"—or devils—in the faces of those about him. This fictionalized biography of the great Italian is a companion to similar

ones of Rembrandt, Van Gogh, and Michelangelo, all attractively written and illustrated, but having little appeal for the elementary school child.

For children over twelve who have developed background through creative art experiences and visits to galleries, the four books have some value. Danylu Belser

The Dancing Heart. By Lucile Rosenheim. Julian Messner, \$2.50.

A high-school girl, a New Yorker, a student of ballet—a combination of all of these persons is Anne. When she suddenly loses her parents through an automobile accident, she goes to live with her widowed aunt in the Middle West. Lucile Rosenheim, who obviously knows well the problems and the pleasures of young people, interprets Anne's relationships with the new community as a whole and with each person vital to her in it. The interpretation is made through activity and adventure into the every-day lives of the girls and boys of the neighborhood and the small-town high school.

The author has woven enough of the dance into the book to help a young lady teach a reticent young man his "first steps!" The author's insight comes from fifteen years of teaching all types of dancing to young persons. Any reader will discover that the teacher found her students interesting people!

Besides possessing the values of fast-moving plot, excellent descriptions, realistic pen-drawing of personalities, and readable style, the story emphasizes the psychological developments of attitudes toward great personal loss and the ensuing inevitable adjustments to new ways of thinking. Naomi C. Chase

O. K. for Drive-Away. By Henry Lent. Illustrated with photographs. The Macmillan Company, \$2.50.

This is another book in the "How and Why Books" series. It replaces the author's *Wide Road Ahead*, a popular book for children inter-

ested in travel on the open road.

With every teacher concerned with building meaning into the concepts learned by children, there are increasing thousands traveling on field trips to scenes of industry. Henry Lent has written a book to precede, to follow, or to substitute for an actual trip to an automobile factory. Written in first person, filled with items of interest to young people, amply illustrated with photographs, told in an informal way, the book manages, in effect, a "conducted tour."

One of the values of the book lies in the introductory chapters which describe simply, and sometimes humorously, the early days of the automobile. Another special feature is the detail surrounding items included on the subjects of automobile designing, quality of materials used, assembly-line work, testing and test-driving, and safety. There is a wide age range of use for this book. Nine-year-olds and sixteen-year-olds will find the contents equally absorbing for pleasure reading or for study.

Naomi C. Chase

The Wabash Knows the Secret. By Elisabeth Hamilton Friermood. Illustrated by Grace Paull. Doubleday, \$2.50.

A regional period story of a family, living on the banks of the Wabash river. Great-grandfather's death and its connection with the hidden wheat money and the gypsies; the child Emma's championing of the gypsies; the spiritual struggle that preceded her baptism in the river; and the remarkable adjustment to her mother's hospitalization, are too much and too many. Mystery should alleviate the didactic, self-conscious writing, but neither the introduction of gypsies nor teen-age love can enliven the story. Not at all on a par with the Lenski regionals. Frances E. Whitehead

Across the Shining Mountains with the Trailblazers of the Northwest. By Clara Tutt. Illustrated by Norman Graham and the author. Exposition Press, \$2.00.

A collection of incidents concerned with

various attempts to reach and cross the Continental Divide. Unfortunately, the material, which could be very dramatic, is told in monotonously simple sentences with characters who never come alive. Jean Gardiner Smith

For the Middle Grades

In Yards and Gardens. By Margaret Waring Buck. Illustrated by the author. Abingdon-Cokesbury. \$3.00.

Almost encyclopedic in scope, this companion volume to the author's "In Woods and Fields" (published 1950) contains everything that children eight to eleven will want to know about the birds, flowers, trees and shrubs, plants and vegetables, insects, snakes, and mammals common to the northeastern part of the United States. Facts and illustrations have been checked by specialists. Numerous small and attractive drawings assure its popularity as a table picture-book, although it will be just as useful for reference and general reading. There is an index of common and scientific names, a good table of contents, and a bibliography.

Elizabeth M. Beal

Leif the Lucky. By Ingri and Edgar d'Aulaire. Illustrated by the authors. Doubleday and Co., \$2.75.

The illustrations, lithographed on stone by the talented d'Aulaires, and the artistic text of this stirring book are equal to the adventurous events they relate. This is not a book to be read once and put aside, but with each rereading will bring more satisfaction and delight. The colorful pictures have vigor, humor, and imagination. It is good to have this book available again for the boys and girls of the middle elementary grades. Third graders would enjoy listening to the adventures of this famous Viking.

Doris H. Moulton

George Washington, Leader of His People. By Clara Ingram Judson. Illustrated by Robert Frankenberg. Wilcox and Follett Co. Trade Binding \$3.50. Library Binding \$3.63.

By careful selection of incidents Mrs. Jud-

son has succeeded in creating for young people a portrait of Washington as a real personality and at the same time establishing his position with the people of his time. She has shown his greatness and integrity without sentimentality or priggishness and has given us the boy with a love of adventure and the man as a farmer and an affectionate husband and father. A competent, well organized biography with attractive illustrations for grades five and up.

Doris H. Moulton

Aircraft U. S. A. By Harriet E. Huntington. Doubleday and Company, Inc., \$2.50.

For the young and old, for the initiated and uninitiated, *Aircraft U. S. A.* is an excellent summary in actual photographs and works of the modern military and civilian aircraft of the United States. Each page of this forty-nine page book contains a clear one-half page photograph plus a brief description of one American airplane.

Photographs by the military services and aircraft manufacturers and accurate descriptions of the important features of each aircraft by the author make this book excellent reading and "looking" for all.

Kenneth L. Husbands

Boy of the Pyramids; a mystery of ancient Egypt. By Ruth Fosdick Jones. Illustrated by Dorothy Bayley Morse. Random House, \$2.50.

Definitely written with the purpose of presenting life in Egypt at the time of the building of the Great Pyramid of Khufu, this book will probably be much more useful as supplementary reading in history and geography for fourth through sixth grades than as a book for general reading interest. By following the adventures of the main characters the ten year-olds, Kaffe, a son of a wealthy noble, and Sari, a slave girl whom he befriends, the reader is introduced to manners and customs of the period. The format is attractive with many illustrations in black and white and clear, readable type. Recommended for limited purchase.

Laura E. Cathon

Lincoln's Little Correspondent. By Hertha Pauli. Illustrated by Fritz Kredel. Doubleday, \$2.50.

Based on fact and graphically presented, this is the story of young Bedell, who, in 1860, wrote a letter to Abraham Lincoln to suggest that he grow a beard in order to help him win the presidential election. Not only did he follow her advice but the successful candidate honored his "little correspondent" when his train stopped at Westfield enroute to Washington. The format of the book is good with large print and illustrations in black and white. A facsimile of Grace's letter appears on the end papers. Useful for grades four and five and as supplementary material on Lincoln for all ages. Recommended.

Laura E. Cathon

Pitch Pine Tales. By Howard R. Driggs. Illustrated by L. F. Bjorklund. Aladdin, \$2.00.

As pioneers were expanding our country, building their new homes, churches, schools, and towns, they not only lived exciting stories, but by word of mouth around the campfires and hearthstones, they preserved tales of these and earlier days. *Pitch Pine Tales*, by Howard R. Driggs, is a collection of such stories told in the style of reminiscing grandparents entertaining the youngsters. Attractive format and large clear type will invite eight-to-ten-year-olds to read, but the manner of presentation is rather complicated for the age groups for which the book is intended. All the same, boys and girls who always want one more story about pioneers and Indians will find some of the stories to their liking.

Frances Rees

Summerfield Farm. By Mary Martin Black. Illustrated by Wesley Dennis. Viking, \$2.50.

Summerfield Farm is a real place. The author first introduces the reader to Summerfield Farm, then to the farmer who is in charge of it. From thereon grandmother tells the three generations assembled some of the stories that made up the life there. These tales are told to help Granny and Faddy decide whether or not to keep the farm. Each of the 17 tales is a story

in itself and deals with animals and poultry found on most farms. The decision to "live out" some more stories is unanimously given. The lovely action drawings at each chapter head are done in the usual Wesley Dennis style. Excellent classroom read-aloud for 3rd graders—read-at-home for 5th.

Helen C. Bough

The Saucepan Journey. By Edith Unnerstad. Illustrated by Louis Slobodkin. Macmillan, \$2.50.

Papa Larsson, the inventor of a wonderful whistling saucepan, uses his skill to adapt two large drays for a traveling summer home. Then he and Mama and their seven children, each a real individual, set forth on a combined vacation and selling trip through Sweden. Hilarious incidents follow, each somehow adding to the publicity about the saucepan, Peep.

The jacket tells us that the book won a 10,000 kroner prize in Sweden last year as the best book for children. Except for some facts about Swedish cities which might better have been omitted, the story could have happened almost anywhere. The author has a lively imagination and a gift for observing the telling detail. The humor is the kind that members of loving families will recognize with delight. This should really be read aloud but fifth and sixth graders will enjoy reading it to themselves.

Agnes Krarup

For Younger Children

Looking-For-Something. By Ann Nolan Clark. Illustrated by Leo Politi. Viking Press, \$2.50.

An early acquaintance with other lands and peoples is provided the small child (4-7) in this tale of a little burro's wanderings through Ecuador. It is a story to be heard and enjoyed for its rhythmic pace and simple language. Well-placed repetitions and careful matching of text with illustration help to introduce the child to many new words and ideas, such as "canyon," "hacienda," "sun-drying cocoa beans." The colorful illustrations catch the

very breath and sunlight of the Andes, the personality of the country and its people. Direct experience has enabled artist and author to present a clear and appealing picture of Andean life from rural mountainside to city plaza.

Mary Jane Aschner

One Morning in Maine. By Robert McCloskey. Viking Press, \$2.50.

Little Sal, the venturesome small girl in *Blueberries for Sal*, is just as engaging though somewhat older in this new story of her good times with her mother and father and small sister Jane. In one blissful day Sal loses a tooth, goes clam digging, travels to town by boat, and has a chocolate ice cream cone at the town store. The story radiates warmth and kindly humor as both the family and the town people share a little girl's happiness in the wish-bearing magic of her lost tooth. Illustrations in deep blue are distinguished in the full-page sea and shore scenes, and appealing in the home-like details of the family life pictures. An outstanding book for five to eight year olds.

Margaret M. Clark

Small Trot. By Francoise. Scribner, \$2.00.

In this new picture book, the winner of the 1951 New York Herald Tribune Prize for *Jeane Marie Counts Her Sheep* gives us another delightful picture book. Small-Trot is a charming little mouse who belongs to a large mouse family that does not have much to live on; so Small-Trot joins a traveling circus to help out, and is a big success. The illustrations are striking and lovely in design, and the book will be a big success with small children. Recommend highly. Preschool, 1-3 grades.

Helen E. Skahill

Song of St. Francis. By Clyde Robert Bulla. Illustrated by Valenti Angelo. Crowell, \$2.50.

The atmosphere of medieval Italy and the mountains around Assisi are very realistically presented both in text and illustrations in this story of the life of St. Francis of Assisi.

Most of the book is about his life as a boy, telling of his unselfishness, his love of animals, of birds and of people. The story ends when he

becomes a kindly monk, and welcomes a boyhood friend to join him.

A beautiful and very worth-while book that can be read by third graders themselves, and that will also be enjoyed by somewhat older boys and girls. Recommend very highly.

Helen E. Skahill

Lois and Looie. By Lois Fisher. With pictures by Lois Fisher and Karl Murr. Childrens Press, Inc. \$2.00.

This slim volume takes the child reader (publisher's rating: grade 3 reading level) "inside a TV show" — one which uses simple cartoons for children. Whatever the merits of the actual TV show which gave rise to it, the book itself contains merely an excursion into the technique of TV. Unless one finds much merit in third graders learning simple things about studio production technique, there is little to commend it. No human values are perceptible in the story.

Dallas W. Smythe

Torten's Christmas Secret. By Maurice Dolbier. Illustrated by Robert Henneberger. Little, Brown And Company, \$2.50.

Torten, a gnome in Santa's workshop, made toys all year from scraps and pieces he brought home from the workshop. Colored rags, blocks of wood, buttons, extra wheels, little hunks of metal found their places in odd shaped toys. He was worried about the "bad children" and the letters he found in the wastebasket. He felt some children were better than others, but none were bad, so all deserved gifts. His difficulties in filling the bill and his encounter with Santa Claus on Christmas Eve makes an unusually good read aloud story for second and third grade listening, fourth grade reading. Every page colorfully illustrated.

Helen C. Bough

Petunia and the Song. Written and illustrated by Roger Duvoisin. Knopf, \$1.75.

In this second book about Petunia, the silly goose captures a thief because of her constant efforts to enter the farmhouse and discover who is singing a song about her. The song is gay and

lively with many repetitions of sounds, the pictures are bright with primary colors, and the story moves at a lively pace. Though far-fetched in theme, it has possibilities for dramatization and singing as well as reading entertainment.

Margaret M. Clark

Henry, The Hand-Painted Mouse. By Jean Merrill. Illustrated by Ronnie Solbert. Coward-McCann, \$1.75.

On all the lofts below, people were much too busy doing things to notice the grey fluff of dust which was Henry the Mouse. He was lonely until an artist came to the eighth loft. While he painted neckties and pictures and talked to Henry about the "nature of the world," the artist absent-mindedly wiped his brush on Henry. After several such conversations, Henry became indeed a hand-painted mouse. There is a feeling of freedom and gaiety in both the text and the line drawings. Children like particularly the drawing of Henry somersaulting down and shinnying back up the elevator chute.

Virginia M. Reid

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To her mother's embarrassed protestations that a little girl who skillfully buttoned her coat every day should have no trouble with this simple exercise, the child replied, "But, Mother, it doesn't *button* anything!"

We suspect that behind the revolt of many children against the niceties of spelling lies the same clear-eyed understanding — "Lists of words don't *spell* anything."

Children write, read, speak, and listen to words *in context*. The study of spelling ought therefore to be part of language study as a whole. Only then will the complex of skills support spelling ability — and, in turn, only then will spelling skills help to develop ability in the understanding and use of language.

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Word Power Through Spelling is by Lillian E. Billington, for grades 2 — 8, in workbook and cloth editions.

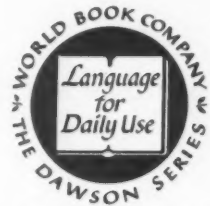
Teachers' Guides contain a basic speech program which helps children to spell better by making them sensitive to English sounds . . . by Doris W. Goodrich, Rochester Public Schools, Rochester, New York.

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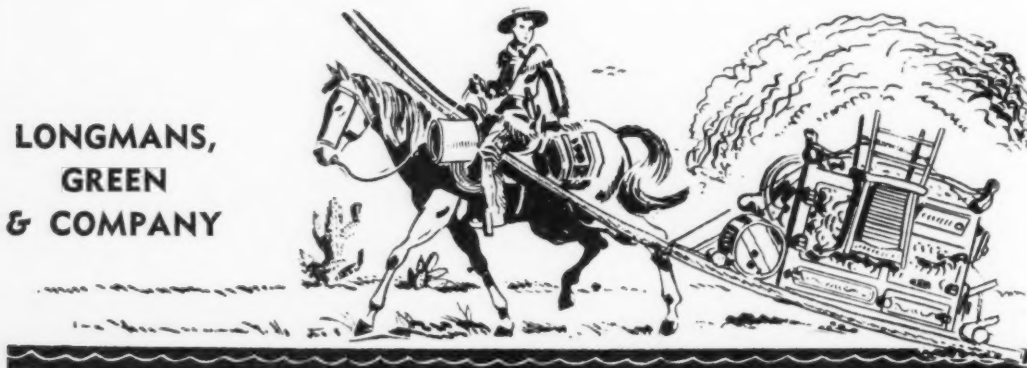
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By GERALDINE WYATT. Decorations by Carl Kidwell. A white boy, captured and raised as an Indian, joins Jesse Chisholm on the trail in an exciting adventure of the early West by the author of *Buffalo Gold*. 172 pages. Ages 10-14. \$2.50

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NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

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Elementary ENGLISH

An official organ of the NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH
211 W. 68th Street, Chicago 21, Illinois

FOUNDED, 1924, BY C. C. CERTAIN

JOHN J. DEBOER, *Editor*
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

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ELEMENTARY ENGLISH is published monthly from October to May by the National Council of Teachers of English at 211 West 68th Street, Chicago 21, Illinois. Subscription price \$3.50 per year; single copies 45 cents. Orders for less than a year's subscription will be charged at the single copy rate. [Postage is prepaid on all orders from the United States, Mexico, Cuba, Porto Rica, Panama Canal Zone, Republic of Panama, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Peru, Uruguay, Hawaiian Islands, Philippine Islands, Guam, Samoan Islands, Virgin Islands and Spain. [Postage is charged extra for Canada and for all other countries in the Postal Union as follows: 24 cents on annual subscription (total \$3.74), on single copies 3 cents (total 48 cents). [Patrons are requested to make all remittances payable to THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH in checks, money orders, or bank drafts. [Claims for missing numbers should be made within the month following the regular month of publication. The publishers expect to supply missing numbers free only when losses have been sustained in transit and when the reserve stock will permit. [All communications should be addressed to THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH, 211 West 68th Street, Chicago 21, Illinois. [Entered as second class matter December 30, 1942, at the post office at Chicago, Illinois under the Act of March 3, 1879. [Additional entry at Seymour, Indiana.

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Printed in the U. S. A.